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Street & Smith's

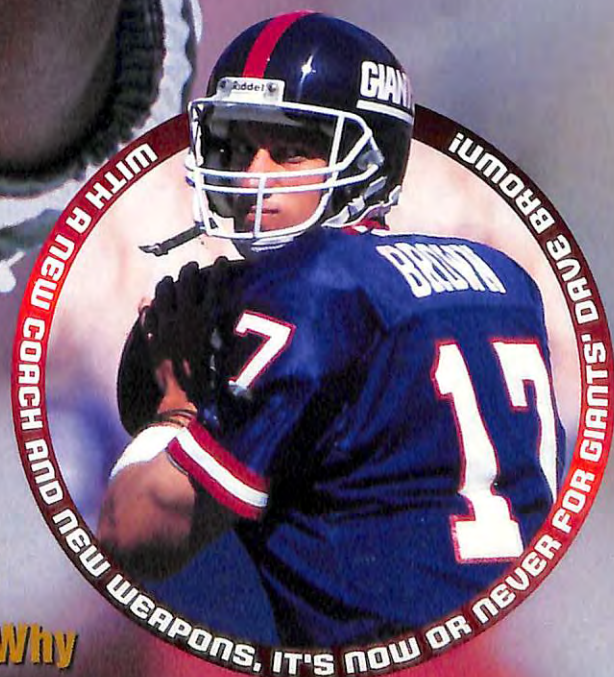
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FROM THE EDITOR

Street & Smith's kicks off with broader coverage than ever before.

After dominating the first two Super Bowls in 1967-68, the Green Bay Packers went on an extended leave from the National Football League championship game. But led by quarterback Brett Favre, the two-time NFL Most Valuable Player, the Packers regained possession of the Super Bowl trophy in January with a 35-21 triumph over the New England Patriots. It was a record 12th title for the franchise.

Staying on top is now the challenge for coach Mike Holmgren and general manager Ron Wolf. The Dallas Cowboys and the San Francisco 49ers, winners in six of the previous eight Super Bowls, can tell them how difficult it is to repeat. The fans in Green Bay don't care to hear such talk. After all, they still recall legendary coach Vince Lombardi, who successfully defended championships three times. Of course, Lombardi never faced the problem of having to replace his Super Bowl MVP.

After returning a kickoff 99 yards against the Patriots, Desmond Howard kept on running, leaving Green Bay via free agency for Oakland, the team the Packers defeated in Super Bowl II. Howard hopes to help new quarterback Jeff George resurrect Oakland's dormant vertical passing game and put the Raiders back in the Super Bowl for the first time since 1984 (the last time the AFC won the game).

Howard's defection was symptomatic of the player movement brought about by free agency. More than ever before, teams are reaching out to players to fill a specific need. As a result, coaches are under more pressure than ever and sense more impatience from owners and fans to win. When the 1997 NFL season begins on August 31, there will be 11 new coaches roaming the sidelines. Dom Capers, the only coach the Carolina Panthers have had in their two years of existence, is now the dean of the NFC West. Meanwhile, George Seifert, who reached 100 victories faster than any other coach, found himself out of a job in San Francisco.

Holmgren said he is "amazed" that coaches like Chuck Noll, Tom Landry, and Don Shula all lasted more than 20 years in the same place: Noll in Pittsburgh, Landry in Dallas, and Shula in Miami. Shula won a record 347 games in his career, including 17 with the 1972 Dolphins, the only undefeated team in pro football history. We sat down with the Hall of Fame coach as he discussed the unforgettable moments and players from that team, and we are pleased to have Shula share that special season with the readers of Street & Smith's. His story appears on page 62.

We are also pleased to announce that readers can now follow *Street & Smith's Pro Football* throughout the 1997 season on SportsFan On-Line (<http://www.sfan.com>) and on the SportsFan Radio Network. Get the great previews, as well as features, profiles, news, statistics, and weekly updates from the preseason through the Super Bowl.

Gerard Kavanagh

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Tecmo Super Bowl allows the user to trade any player, to any team, at any time. With this feature you have the ability to create your own Super Team. Just be careful when you're playing a friend. You had better make sure he didn't set you up. The only advice we can give is check your opponent's roster.

LIVE COMMENTARY

Tecmo Super Bowl's announcer gives true play by play commentary, not just an occasional phrase or two. If perhaps you think he's an idiot, you always have the option of turning him off.

TOURNAMENT MODE

Over the years Tecmo Super Bowl players have let us know about the friendly competitions which sometimes take place. This new version has a built in tournament mode for a



total of 8 players playing one on one till one of the players wins the tournament. Chips and drinks are sadly not included.

DIFFICULTY LEVELS

Knowing that some people haven't been playing Tecmo Super Bowl for years we've included 3 difficulty settings. Easy, Normal and Hard. Our football game gives you the ability to grow with the game. Internally we call this a screen save 'cause you don't have to throw a rock through the TV screen when you get frustrated with the game.

INSTANT REPLAY

If you want to analyze the last several seconds of play, simply pause the game and start the instant replay. In addition you can go frame by frame to fully analyze all of the action. Then again, you may not want to see the interception again, and again, and again.

NEW RECORDS & STATS

Tecmo's stats engine has always been unsurpassed. This year we've added the ability to keep the stats from any player in any position even if it's only for 1 play during the entire season. Here's your one and only chance to re-write the record book.

NEW PLAYBOOK

From the game play menu, you now have access to the entire playbook for the immediate play. ...for more plays than you can possibly want, use, call, send-in, modify, change, and/or run as the case may be.

VARIABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Ordinary football games sometimes have weather conditions. So far as we know, Tecmo Super Bowl is the only game to actually change the weather during the game. So one minute it could be raining,



and then it could start snowing, or then again stop or actually it's too variable to give you all of the possible scenarios.

MORE, MORE AND MORE

We've tried to highlight some of the most important new features of Tecmo Super Bowl for the Sony PlayStation. Obviously there are more features than we can possibly list. Tecmo Super Bowl is one of the most realistic and sophisticated football simulators ever created. Aside from all of the technical improvements, think about the following:

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contents

SCHEDULES

68 **NFC Team Schedules**

69 **AFC Team Schedules**

184 **NFL Weekly Schedule**

FEATURES

39 **Dream Team**

Presenting the best units in the National Football League, position by position.
by Rick Gosselin

46 **New Kids on the Block**

The Bucs, Seahawks, Jets, Rams, and Ravens, who lost a total of 56 games last season, were all big winners in this year's NFL draft.
by Anthony Gargano

54 **Coaching Carousel**

When the NFL merry-go-round stopped for the 1997 season, there were 11 faces in new places.
by Don Pierson

58 **Diary of a Rookie**

The New York Giants' Amani Toomer agreed to share his experiences during his first NFL season with Street & Smith's readers.
with Bill Heller

62 **Year of the Dolphin**

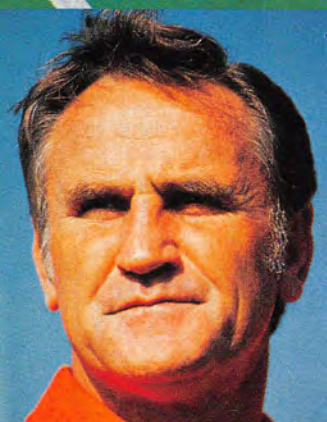
Among Don Shula's record 347 victories were the 17 he achieved with the 1972 Miami Dolphins, the only undefeated team in pro football history.
by Don Shula

64 **Mind Games**

Coaches and players will use anything, including psychological ploys, to gain a competitive edge.
by Scott Ostler



New Kids on the Block p. 46



Year of the Dolphin p. 62



Mind Games p. 64





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NFL PLAYERS

contents

PREVIEWS

National Football Conference

by Don Pierson

70	Eastern Division
88	Central Division
102	Western Division

American Football Conference

by Larry Felser

118	Eastern Division
136	Central Division
150	Western Division

Numbers p. 8

DEPARTMENTS

8 Numbers

Reading between the lines of last season's final stats.

by STATS Inc.

16 Targets

Where today's players stand among the NFL's all-time greats.

17 NFL Players Special Section

Behind the scenes with the stars.

164 Fantasy

The inside track on strategy and hidden performers.

by Dennis LePore

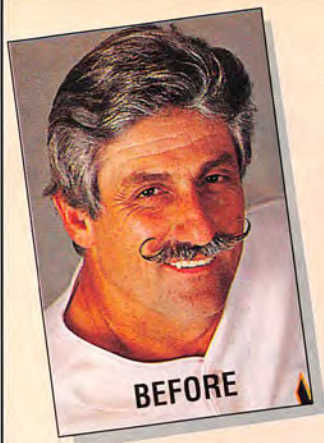
168 1996 Official NFC & AFC Final Stats

182 Super Bowl Recap

Targets p. 16

Fantasy p. 164

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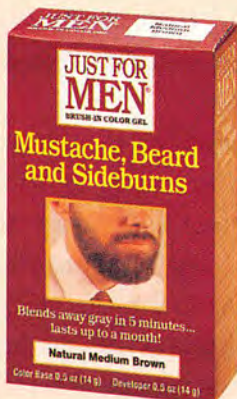
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Rollie Fingers

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Numbers

Reading
between the
lines of last
season's stats.

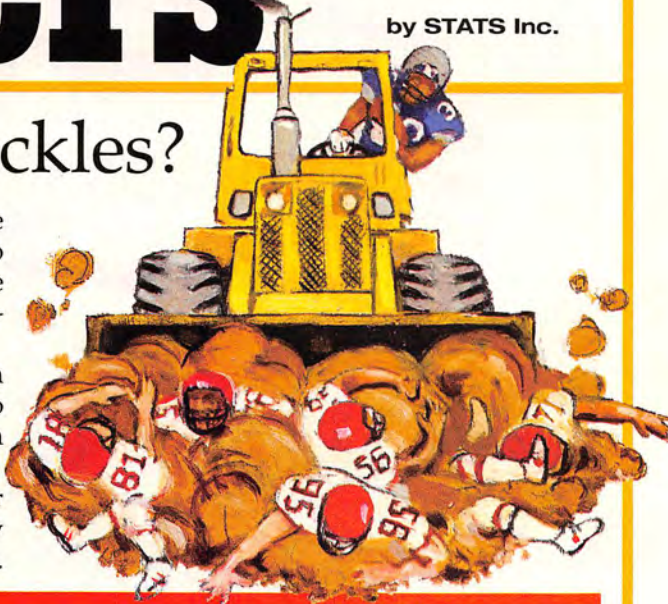
by STATS Inc.

Who breaks the most tackles?

Which running backs are more likely to plow over the defense when they get the ball? The table below shows those who broke the most tackles per rush/reception in 1996. (Players are credited with breaking tackles only when their progress is significantly impeded.)

With Chris Warren hobbled by injuries last year, Lamar Smith got a chance to show Seattle what he could do. On the way to averaging 4.4 yards per carry, Smith averaged nearly one broken tackle for every six times he touched the ball, tops in the NFL.

Bigger backs are more likely to break tackles than smaller ones. The 10 here weigh an average of 227 pounds. Only Barry Sanders (at 203) and Larry Centers (at 215) are below 220 pounds.



PLAYER	RUSH/ CATCH	BROKEN TACKLE	PCT.	PLAYER	RUSH/ CATCH	BROKEN TACKLE	PCT.
Lamar Smith, Seahawks	162	25	15.4	Leonard Russell, Chargers	232	29	12.5
Barry Sanders, Lions	331	50	15.1	Mike Alstott, Buccaneers	161	20	12.4
Kimble Anders, Chiefs	114	17	14.9	Jamal Anderson, Falcons	281	31	11.0
Ray Zellers, Saints	129	17	13.2	Larry Centers, Cardinals	215	22	10.2
Harold Green, Rams	164	21	12.8	James Stewart, Jaguars	220	22	10.0

(Minimum 100 combined rushes/receptions)

Which team goes for it most on fourth down?

Who throws caution to the wind and attempts to convert on fourth down? The top of the chart (right) lists the teams that since 1993 have tried to convert most often; the bottom of the chart lists those who fared best in their attempts to move the chains.

Bill Parcells has never been afraid of

going for it on fourth down. New England has led the league in fourth-down conversion attempts over the last four seasons. In fact, the Patriots took nearly 50 percent more chances than the No. 2 team, the New York Jets. New England converted 49.3 percent, almost the NFL average.

Despite all the criticism that was leveled at Dallas head coach Barry Switzer following his fourth-and-one decision in a game against Philadelphia in 1995, the Cowboys have been the most successful team in the league at converting fourth downs into firsts in recent years.

TEAM	ATTEMPTS
Patriots	136
Jets	92
Bengals	79
Bears	77
Dolphins	74
49ers	71
Chiefs	71
Colts	70
Rams	70
Chargers	69
NFL Avg.	62

TEAM	SUCCESS PCT.
Cowboys	62.5
49ers	62.0
Bears	59.7
Dolphins	58.1
Chiefs	54.9
Colts	54.3
Chargers	53.6
Packers	51.0
Bills	51.0
Browns/Ravens	50.9
NFL Avg.	49.8

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NOTE: Child sizes not available with sleeve numbers.

Adult sizes: 40, 44, 46, 48, 52, 54 **\$40**

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Toddler sizes: 2T, 3T, 4T **\$22**

Item# **EKKJ**



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All NFL teams available.

Youth sizes: S, M, L, XL **\$50**

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Item# **FAAP**

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Most NFL teams available.

Item# **FMMH** **\$25**



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Adult sizes: M, L, XL, XXL **\$16**

Item# **FGWT**

NFL Pro Line Mesh Shorts

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All NFL teams available.

Adult sizes: M(32-34), L(36-38), XL(40-42), XXL(44-46) **\$27** Item# **FMWS**



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SSF97

Who can't hang onto the ball?



Not every running back can be trusted with the football when his team is attempting to protect a lead. Listed below are the players who fumbled on the highest percentage of their touches last year (with touches defined as rushing attempts plus receptions):

TOUCHES FUM. PCT.

Tyrone Wheatley, Giants	124	5	4.03
Leonard Russell, Chargers	232	6	2.59
LeShon Johnson, Cardinals	156	4	2.56
Mike Alstott, Buccaneers	161	4	2.48
Lamar Smith, Seahawks	162	4	2.47
Mario Bates, Saints	177	4	2.26
Leroy Hoard, Rav.-Pan.-Vik.	136	3	2.21
Harvey Williams, Raiders	143	3	2.10
Jerome Bettis, Steelers	342	7	2.05
Rashaan Salaam, Bears	150	3	2.00

(Minimum 100 touches)

The Giants' Tyrone Wheatley wins the 1996 Butterfingers Award. His struggles can be traced to a three-game stretch in November and December when he coughed up the ball three times in the span of 26 carries. Wheatley, suffering from an ankle sprain, had just three rushing attempts in the Giants' final two games.

One common thread runs through four of the top five players above: They are young and relatively inexperienced. Mike Alstott was a rookie in 1996, Wheatley was an NFL sophomore, and LeShon Johnson and Lamar Smith were third-year players who entered the season with fewer than 50 NFL touches.

Who takes best advantage of mistakes?

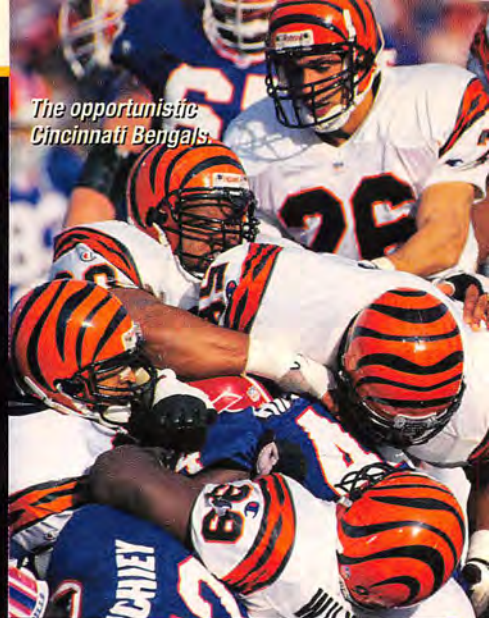
There's nothing that can change the momentum of a game more quickly than a turnover. And when a team is able to capitalize on a turnover with a quick score, the results can be devastating for the opposition. Here are the most opportunistic teams, and the points they scored off turnovers in 1996:

Cincinnati	150
San Diego	133
Green Bay	132
New England	128
Pittsburgh	120

Thanks to their NFL-leading 44 takeaways, the Bengals were able to outscore their opponents by three points despite being outgained by 244 total yards. But success on the field requires more than an ability to take the ball away. A team must also avoid giving it back to the opposition.

At right are those teams that allowed the fewest points off giveaways last year:

Green Bay	44
Washington	48
San Francisco	55
Miami	62
Carolina	62



The opportunistic Cincinnati Bengals.

It's no coincidence that the Super Bowl champion Packers were the only team to show up on both of these lists. They led the league in points scored and fewest points allowed by holding on to the ball on offense and taking it away on defense.

Show me the money receivers!

The players listed on the right really came through in the clutch in '96. They led the league in first-down receptions on third down.

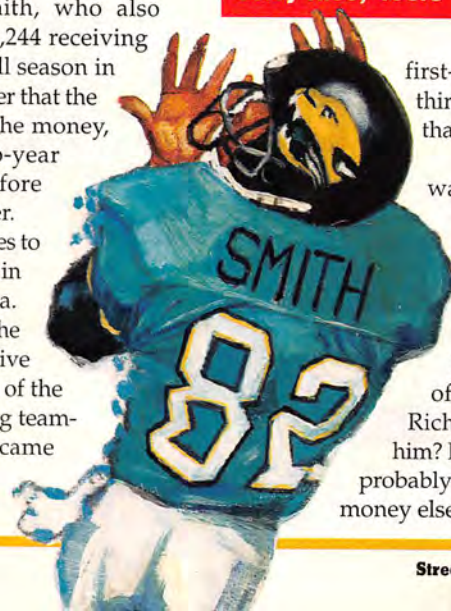
When it came time to keep a drive alive, no receiver in the league made his agent happier than Jacksonville's Jimmy Smith, who also paced the AFC with 1,244 receiving yards in his second full season in the league. Little wonder that the Jaguars showed him the money, inking Smith to a two-year contract extension before the '96 season was over.

Cris Carter continues to show why he's money in the bank for Minnesota. He's the only player in the NFL to rank in the top five in this category in each of the last four seasons. Viking teammate Jake Reed also came through in the clutch, leading the league in

PLAYER	1ST DOWNS
Jimmy Smith, Jaguars	25
Cris Carter, Vikings	23
O.J. McDuffie, Dolphins	23
Jake Reed, Vikings	23
Irving Fryar, Eagles	22
Brett Perriman, Lions	22
Tim Brown, Raiders	21
Mark Carrier, Panthers	21
Wayne Chrebet, Jets	21
Carl Pickens, Bengals	21
Jerry Rice, 49ers	21

first-down catches on third-and-long (more than 8 yards to go).

Wayne Chrebet was one of the few Jets who lived up to expectation last year, but will new coach Bill Parcells show him the same kind of confidence that Rich Kotite showed him? If not, Chrebet will probably be looking for his money elsewhere.



Show your expertise! If you answer these three questions correctly, you will be entered into a drawing, and you could win the top prize: two tickets to a 1997 NFL regular season game in your home city! 40 respondents with all correct answers will also be drawn, and will receive a box of Fleer Football Cards! Your entry must be postmarked by September 1, 1997.

FLEER FOOTBALL CHALLENGE

If all your answers are correct, you will be entered into the drawing. You could win the top prize of two tickets to an NFL regular season game in your home city, or you could be one of 40 winners of a box of Fleer Football Cards! Fill in your answers, and all your personal information, and return to: **STREET & SMITH SPORTS GROUP, 342 MADISON AVE, SUITE 2010, NEW YORK NY 10017**

YOUR ANSWERS

1. ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C

2. ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C

3. ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C

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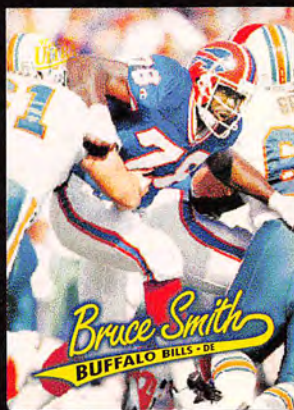
1. Which of these running backs rushed for the most yards in 1996?

A **TERRELL DAVIS**



2. Which of these defensive players got the most sacks in 1996?

A **BRUCE SMITH**



3. Which of these quarterbacks threw for the most yards in 1996?

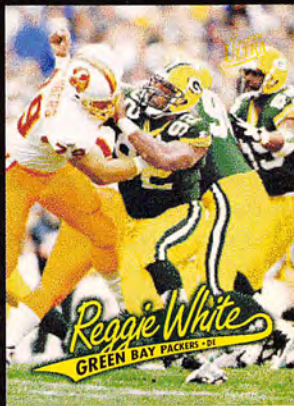
A **BRETT FAVRE**



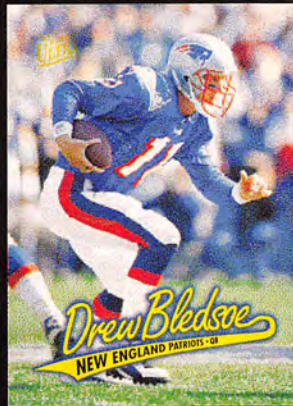
B **BARRY SANDERS**



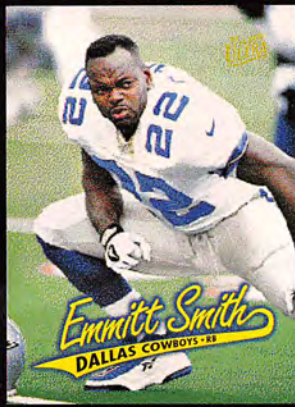
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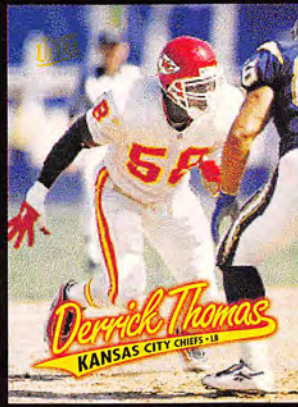
B **DREW BLEDSOE**



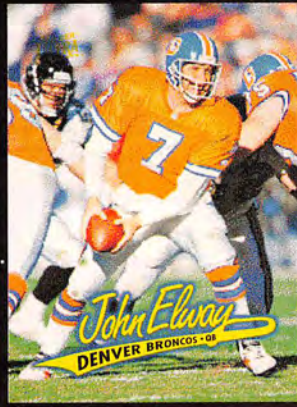
C **EMMITT SMITH**

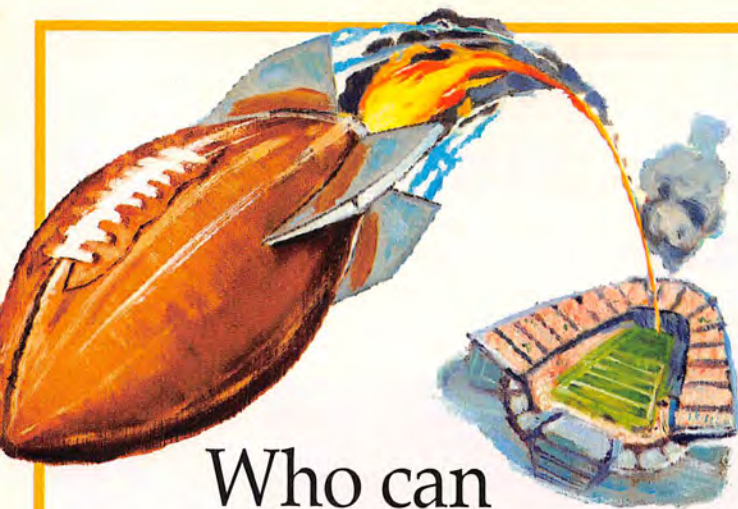


C **DERRICK THOMAS**



C **JOHN ELWAY**





Who can (and can't) air it out?

Atention, Al Davis! The Oakland Raiders owner loves the vertical passing game, having built his offense around it for decades. The only problem is, over the last few years, his pitchers have come up short when it comes to throwing long. Among those who qualified for the '96 NFL passing title, the five quarterbacks listed at the top of the chart (above, right) had the best rating when their passes traveled at least 20 yards.

Though the 49ers' offense is based on quick slants, crossing routes, and throws into the flat, that doesn't mean San Francisco won't air it out occasionally. And why not? Steve Young has led this category for three years running, with a cumula-

Whose bombs were caught...

	COMP.	ATT.	PCT.	TD	INT.	RATING
Steve Young	14	36	38.9	6	2	103.0
Jim Kelly	16	44	36.4	4	2	95.8
Mike Tomczak	21	47	44.7	6	4	95.5
Brett Favre	25	82	30.5	11	4	90.9
Jim Harbaugh	19	53	35.8	4	2	89.0

... and whose bombs fell harmlessly last year?

	COMP.	ATT.	PCT.	TD	INT.	RATING
Troy Aikman	10	52	19.2	0	6	16.4
Trent Dilfer	14	57	24.6	2	6	28.9
Dave Brown	9	47	19.1	3	10	32.0
Dave Krieg	5	31	16.1	2	5	32.3
Bobby Hebert	13	55	23.6	3	5	41.9

tive rating of 115.6 over that period, when his passes travel at least 20 yards. Brett Favre has a cannon, and he's not afraid to use it. No one could top his total of 82 long throws in '96.

During his 1995 Super Bowl run, Troy Aikman completed 40 percent of his 20+ yard passes for four scores and only one interception, building a rating of 110.4. So consider his 16.4 rating in '96 a one-year blip. As for the bottom five names on the chart, Dave Krieg and Bobby Hebert are out of starting jobs, and some people feel Trent Dilfer and Dave Brown should be as well. In his two years as a starter, Dilfer has three touchdowns and 13 interceptions when he's attempted to air it out.

Which offenses give their defenses a breather?

Exhausted defenses make for easy prey. But these offenses did the best job of letting their teammates across the line catch their breath. The teams whose offenses had the fewest three-and-out drives in 1996 are listed in the chart, at right.

Five of these top six teams made the playoffs, and the Oilers were in the hunt until the final weeks of the season. The Packers, Steel-

ers, Broncos, Eagles, Oilers, and Raiders all had defensive units that ranked in the top eight in the NFL a year ago. Strong running games certainly help an offense avoid three-and-out drives, and few rushing attacks were better than those powered by Edgar Bennett, Jerome Bettis, Terrell Davis, Ricky Watters, Eddie George, and the duo of Napoleon Kaufman and Harvey Williams.

Team 3 & outs

Steelers	33
Oilers	34
Packers	35
Broncos	36
Jaguars	36
Eagles	37
Raiders	37
Cardinals	38
NFL Average	43



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WEEKLY	\$100 CASH	\$50 CASH	\$40 CASH	\$30 CASH	\$20 CASH	\$10 CASH		



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SCORING

PASSING	KICKING
Passing TD 3 Points	Field Goal 3 Points
*20 Passing Yds. 1 Point	Extra Point 1 Point
RECEIVING	DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS
Receiving TD 3 Points	Shutout 15 Points
**10 Receiving Yds. 1 Point	1-10 Pts Allowed . 10 Points
2 pt. Conversion . . 2 Points	11-20 Pts Allowed . 5 Points
RUSHING	Safety 2 Points
Rushing TD 6 Points	Any Defensive or
**10 Rushing Yds. . . 1 Point	Special Teams TD . 6 Points
2 pt. Conversion . . 2 Points	TEAM VICTORY
OTHER TD's BY PLAYER	Each Player 3 Points
Any other TD 6 Points	Defense/Special . . 3 Points
Such as KO Return, Punt Return, Interception Return or a Recovery	
*.05 Point awarded for each passing yard	
**10 Point awarded for each rushing or receiving yard	

As your players score points, gain yards, and play tough defense, they'll be earning points for your team.

- Teams in each league are sorted by each team's total points. The team with the highest point total will be first and the team with the lowest point total will be last.
- To determine overall standings, all teams in *The MSNFC Fantasy Football Game* are sorted by each team's total points.
- Points are accumulated weekly for all 22 starting players and defense/special teams. The week begins with games played on Thursday and ends with games played on Monday. The game begins with Week 1.
- For each of your starting players whose NFL team wins that week, you will get three points. If your starting defense wins that week, you will get three points.
- Defense points allowed is based on the final score of the game versus the defense/special team selected.

- Two point conversion points are awarded to the player scoring the conversion.
- Teams will receive 0.05 points for each passing yard and 0.10 points for each receiving or rushing yard.
- Yards from defense/special teams' returns do not count.
- All points accumulated by the players on the starting lineup, regardless of what position they play during the season, contribute to a team's point totals.
- A player's points are added to your team's point totals only during the weeks that he is in your starting lineup.
- Bench players' points do not contribute to your team's point totals for the weeks they are not in the starting lineup.
- Points by a player before he was on your roster do not count.
- Pre-season, play-off, and pro bowl points do not contribute to your team's point totals.
- To determine weekly winners each Tuesday, the point totals from games played the previous 5 days (Thursday-Monday) will be used. First weekly prizes will be awarded Sept. 9, 1997, and based on games played September 7-8.

All values are in 000's. Values & Positions do not change. Bench can be made up of any mix of players & teams.

KICKERS			QUARTERBACKS			QUARTERBACKS (cont)			RUNNING BACKS (cont)			RUNNING BACKS (cont)			RUNNING BACKS (cont)		
NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL	NO	PLAYER	TM VAL
1	BONILLI, CHRIS	PHI 2590	101	FAVRE, BRETT	GB 6500	125	O'DONNELL, NEIL	NYJ 3210	201	SMITH, EMMITT	DAL 6150	231	KIRBY, TERRY	SF 2270	261	GREEN, ROBERT	CHI 1210
2	ELAM, JASON	DEN 2590	102	ELWAY, JOHN	DEN 6160	126	FREROTTE, GUS	WAS 3140	202	MARTIN, CURTIS	NE 5420	232	HOLMES, DARICE	BUF 2260	262	GREEN, HAROLD	STL 1200
3	VINTIERI, ADAM	NE 2590	103	YOUNG, STEVE	SF 6100	127	KRAMER, ERIK	CHI 2970	203	SANDERS, BARRY	DET 5390	233	LEVENS, DORSEY	GB 2240	263	BYARS, KEITH	NE 1170
4	BLANTON, SCOTT	WAS 2540	104	BRUNELL, MARK	JAC 6010	128	DILFER, TRENT	TB 2800	204	WATTERS, RICKY	PHI 5080	234	RUSSELL, LEONARD	SD 2130	264	TILLMAN, LEWIS	N/A 1150
5	CARNEY, JOHN	SD 2500	105	BLEDSE, DREW	NE 5770	129	CUNNINGHAM, RANDALL	MIN 2170	205	DAVIS, TERRELL	DEN 4940	235	SMITH, ANTONIOW	BUF 2000	265	WHEATLEY, TYRONE	NYG 1130
6	JOHNSON, NORM	PIT 2460	106	BLAKE, JEFF	CIN 5520	130	HEBERT, BOBBY	ATL 2120	206	ALLEN, TERRY	WAS 4750	236	DUNN, WARRICK	TB 2000	266	FLETCHER, TERRELL	SD 1110
7	CHRISTIE, STEVE	BUF 2450	107	MARINO, DAN	MIA 5440	131	ERICKSON, CRAIG	MIA 2110	207	WARREN, CHRIS	SEA 4600	237	PHILLIPS, LAWRENCE	STL 1990	267	JOHNSON, LESHOM	ARZ 1090
8	PELFREY, DOUG	ATL 2440	108	TESTAVERDE, VINNY	BAL 5320	132	JOHNSON, BRAD	MIN 2050	208	FAULK, MARSHALL	IND 4440	238	LOVILLE, DEREK	SF 1970	268	JOHNSON, DARYL	DAL 1080
9	KASAY, JOHN	CAR 2410	109	EVERETT, JIM	NO 5120	133	BRUCKENMILLER, JIM	SF 2000	209	GEORGE, EDDIE	HOU 4340	239	HEARST, GARRISON	SF 1960	269	WAY, CHARLES	NYG 1060
10	ANDERSEN, MORTON	ATL 2410	110	MOON, WARREN	SEA 4930	134	TOMCZAK, MIKE	PIT 1870	210	ABDUL-JABBAR, KARIM	MIA 4080	240	BYNER, EARNEST	BAL 1940	270	ZELLARS, RAY	NO 1060
11	ANDERSON, GARY	PHI 2300	111	MITCHELL, SCOTT	DET 4900	135	PEETE, RODNEY	PHI 1880	211	THOMAS, THURMAN	BUF 3800	241	THOMAS, RODNEY	HOU 1940	271	JOHNSON, JOHNNY	SF 1050
12	STOVER, MATT	BAL 2260	112	HUMPHRIES, STAN	IND 4520	136	FRIESZ, JOHN	SEA 1830	212	BENNETT, EDGAR	GB 3470	242	ANDERS, KIMBLE	KC 1930	272	WHITE, LORENZO	BAL 1030
13	DEL GRECO, AL	HOU 2240	113	HOSTETLER, JEFF	RAI 4440	137	GRABAC, ELVIS	KC 1700	213	BETTIS, JEROME	PIT 3350	243	HARMON, RONNIE	HOU 1890	273	BROWN, GARY	SD 1010
14	STOYANOVICH, PETE	KC 2230	114	AIKMAN, TROY	DAL 4340	138	BEUERLEIN, STEVE	CAR 1680	214	ALLEN, MARCUS	KC 3230	244	PEGARM, ERIC	PIT 1830	274	CARTER, KI-JANA	CIN 1010
15	JACKE, CHRIS	GB 2200	115	BROWN, DAVID	NYG 4190	139	PLUMMER, JAKE	ARZ 1600	215	HAMPTON, RODNEY	NYG 3180	245	CRABER, AARON	SD 1830	275	MCELROY, LEEAN	ARZ 1000
16	HOLLIS, MIKE	JAC 2190	116	GEORGE, JEFF	RAI 4190	140	MCNAIR, STEVE	HOU 1580	216	WILLIAMS, HARVEY	RAI 3130	246	KAUFMAN, NAPOLEON	RAI 1830	276	COBB, REGGIE	NYJ 1000
17	HANSON, JASON	DET 2130	117	BANKS, TONY	STL 4180	141	DETMER, TY	PHI 1490	217	RHETT, ERIC	TB 3070	247	HILL, GREG	KC 1760	277	HAYDEN, AARON	SD 1000
18	BRIEN, DOUG	NO 2000	118	COLLINS, KERRY	CAR 3990	142	STEWART, KORDELL	PIT 1480	218	CENTERS, LARRY	ARZ 3030	248	SMITH, LAMAR	SEA 1620	278	GRAHAM, SCOTTIE	CIN 1000
19	NEDNEY, JOE	MIA 1920	119	HARBAUGH, JIM	IND 3790	143	GRAHAM, KENT	ARZ 1450	219	HEYWARD, CRAIG	STL 2910	249	LEE, AMP	MIN 1600	279	BAKABUTUKA, TIM	CAR 1000
20	HUSTED, MICHAEL	TB 1900	120	ESIASON, BOOMER	N/A 3700	144	REICH, FRANK	NYJ 1420	220	MEANS, NATRONE	JAC 2910	250	BARBER, TIKI	NYG 1600			
21	BUTLER, KEVIN	ARZ 1870	121	KRIEG, DAVE	HOU 3680	145	SHULER, HEATH	NO 1250	221	MORRIS, BYRON	BAL 2740	251	EDWARDS, MARC	SF 1600			
22	REVEIZ, FUAD	NYJ 1870	122	BOND, STEVE	GB 3410	146	RYPIEN, MARK	STL 1100	222	SALAAM, RASHAAN	CHI 2650	252	GARNER, CHARLIE	PHI 1540			
23	LOWERY, NICK	ARZ 1710	123	MIRER, RICK	CHI 3350	147	ROBERT, BILLY JOE	BUF 1000	223	ALSTOTT, MIKE	TB 2570	253	HARRIS, RAYMOND	CHI 1480			
24	JAEGER, JEFF	CHI 1710	124	CHANDLER, CHRIS	ATL 3270	148	COLLINS, TODD	BUF 1000	224	PARMALEE, BERNIE	MIA 2560	254	FLOYD, WILLIAM	SF 1480			
25	PETERSON, TODD	SEA 1650							225	STEWART, JAMES T	JAC 2460	255	JOHNSON, ANTHONY	CAR 1470			
26	DAVIS, GREG	ARZ 1620							226	BATES, MARIO	NO 2390	256	MEGGETT, DAVID	NE 1440			
27	FORD, COLE	RAI 1610							227	SMITH, ROBERT	MIN 2380	257	WALKER, HERSCHEL	DAL 1430			
28	DALUISO, BRAD	NYG 1580							228	MURRELL, ADRIAN	NYJ 2360	258	BENIENY, ERIC	CIN 1420			
29	BLANCHARD, CARY	IND 1560							229	ANDERSON, JAMAL	ATL 2320	259	MITCHELL, BRIAN	WAS 1270			
30	LOHMILLER, CHIP	SF 1550							230	HOARD, LEROY	MIN 2290	260	BROWN, DEREK	NO 1230			
31	MURRAY, EDDIE	WAS 1510															
32	WILKINS, JEFF	STL 1440															
33	SISSON, SCOTT	MIN 1200															

The player's team designation is based on his team as of May 12, 1997.
N/A signifies player was not with a team as of May 12, 1997.

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LINEUP

◆ Starting lineup consists of:

3-Kickers
3-Quarterbacks
6-Running Backs

2-Tight Ends
6-Wide Receivers
2-Defense/Special Teams

◆ Starting lineup value cannot exceed \$60,000,000.

◆ The bench consists of any 11 players and/or defense/special teams. They are your backups and may be placed onto your starting lineup for any reason (injury, poor performance, etc.)

◆ Value cap and position distribution rules do not apply for the bench, but do apply when switched onto the starting lineup.

◆ Unlisted players have a salary of \$1,000,000. They must be placed on the bench until September 5th.

LEAGUES

◆ Leagues are formed on a first-come, first-served basis.

◆ 50 teams form a league.

◆ All teams compete for the overall grand prize.

◆ Teams may have many of the same players, but no two teams with the same roster will be in the same league.

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Entries must be phoned or faxed by 9PM CT Saturday, August 30, 1997. Mailed entries must be postmarked by August 30th and received by September 4, 1997.

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Enter a second team for only

Only the players listed here can be in your lineup for Week 1! Players not listed here must be placed on the bench until September 5th.

TIGHT END			WIDE RECEIVER			WIDE RECEIVER (cont)			WIDE RECEIVER (cont)			DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS		
NO	PLAYER	VAL	NO	PLAYER	VAL	NO	PLAYER	VAL	NO	PLAYER	VAL	NO	TEAM	VAL
401	COATES, BEN	NE 2460	501	RICE, JERRY	SF 4150	532	SCOTT, DARNAY	CIN 2210	563	HARPER, ALVIN	TB 1470	801	GREEN BAY	3860
402	SHARPE, SHANNON	DEN 2430	502	MOORE, HERMAN	DET 3700	533	EMANUEL, BERT	ATL 2180	564	ISMAL, QADRY	MIN 1410	802	CAROLINA	3520
403	WALLS, WESLEY	CAR 1700	503	CARTER, CHRIS	MIN 3450	534	JONES, CHRIS	PHI 2160	565	GREEN, WILLIE	DEN 1360	803	DALLAS	3270
404	JONES, BRENT	SF 1500	504	PICKENS, CARL	CIN 3400	535	BLADES, BRIAN	SEA 2110	566	SHEPHERD, LESLIE	WAS 1360	804	DENVER	3150
405	DILGER, KEN	IND 1470	505	BROWN, TIM	RAI 3300	536	SANDERS, FRANK	ARZ 2040	567	SHERARD, MIKE	DEN 1360	805	PITTSBURGH	2980
406	MCCEE, TONY	CIN 1400	506	IRVIN, MICHAEL	DAL 3120	537	MCDUFFIE, O.J.	MIA 2040	568	TURNER, FLOYD	BAL 1350	806	SAN FRANCISCO	2760
407	JACKSON, KEITH	GB 1340	507	SMITH, JIMMY	JAC 3110	538	RISON, ANDRE	N/A 2010	569	HASTINGS, ANDRE	PIT 1340	807	BUFFALO	2700
408	MITCHELL, PETE	JAC 1270	508	REED, JAKE	MIN 3030	539	HAYNES, MICHAEL	NO 2010	570	WILLIAMS, CALVIN	BAL 1340	808	CHICAGO	2530
409	HARRIS, JACKIE	TB 1160	509	FRYAR, IRVING	PHI 2980	540	HILLIARD, IKE	NYG 2000	571	BROOKS, BILL	WAS 1330	809	KANSAS CITY	2360
410	MITCHELL, JOHNNY	DAL 1090	510	GALLOWAY, JOEY	SEA 2980	541	GREEN, YATIL	MIA 2000	572	OWENS, TERRELL	SF 1300	810	NEW YORK GIANTS	2330
411	GREEN, ERIC	N/A 1090	511	ALEXANDER, DERRICK	BAL 2970	542	CARRUTH, RAE	CAR 2000	573	SEAY, MARK	PHI 1230	811	MIAMI	2300
412	DUDLEY, RICKY	RAI 1080	512	BRUCE, ISAAC	STL 2940	543	ANTHONY, REIDEL	TB 2000	574	ENGAM, BOBBY	CHI 1220	812	WASHINGTON	2220
413	CHMURA, MARK	GB 1060	513	MATHIS, TERANCE	ATL 2910	544	CHREBET, WAYNE	NYJ 1970	575	BEEBE, DON	GB 1180	813	NEW ENGLAND	2190
414	GONZALEZ, TONY	KC 1050	514	MARTIN, TONY	SD 2910	545	CARRIER, MARK J	CAR 1960	576	ANDERSON, WILLIE	IND 1180	814	PHILADELPHIA	2130
415	LEFLEUR, DAVID	DAL 1050	515	GLENN, TERRY	NE 2890	546	MORTON, JOHNNIE	DET 1910	577	ISMAL, RAGHIB	CAR 1180	815	OAKLAND	2100
416	NOVACEK, JAY	DAL 1000	516	PERRIMAN, BRETT	DET 2860	547	BARNETT, FRED	MIA 1910	578	HAWKINS, COURTNEY	TB 1170	816	INDIANAPOLIS	2080
417	DRAYTON, TROY	MIA 1000	517	ELLARD, HENRY	WAS 2710	548	THIGPEN, YANCEY	PIT 1870	579	MILLS, ERNIE	CAR 1090	817	TAMPA BAY	2050
418	DUNN, JASON	PHI 1000	518	MILLER, ANTHONY	DEN 2640	549	DAWKINS, SEAN	IND 1810	580	MCCAFFREY, ED	DEN 1080	818	MINNESOTA	1930
419	WYCHECK, FRANK	HOU 1000	519	KENNISON, EDDIE	STL 2620	550	CALLOWAY, CHRIS	NYG 1810	581	BIRDEN, JJ	ATL 1060	819	JACKSONVILLE	1930
420	ASHER, JAMIE	WAS 1000	520	FREEMAN, ANTONIO	GB 2570	551	WESTBROOK, MICHAEL	WAS 1700	582	SLAUGHTER, WEBSTER	NYJ 1060	820	HOUSTON	1730
421	SMITH, IRV	NO 1000	521	CONWAY, CURTIS	CHI 2510	552	SMALL, TORRANCE	NO 1680	583	WILSON, CHARLES	TB 1030	821	SAN DIEGO	1730
422	KINCHEN, BRIAN	BAL 1000	522	GRAHAM, JEFF	NYJ 2480	553	JEFFERSON, SHAWN	NE 1660	584	DAWSON, LAKE	KC 1000	822	ARIZONA	1530
423	JOHNSON, LONNIE	BUF 1000	523	MOORE, ROB	ARZ 2480	554	DAVIS, WILLIE	HOU 1660	585	TASKER, STEVE	BUF 1000	823	ST. LOUIS	1480
424	METZELAARS, PRED	DET 1000	524	BROOKS, ROBERT	GB 2450	555	TIMPSON, MICHAEL	CHI 1640	586	STOKES, J.J.	SF 1000	824	SEATTLE	1390
425	PUPUNU, ALFRED	SD 1000	525	MCCALF, ERIC	SD 2410	556	MCCARDLELL, KEENAN	JAC 1620	587	WILLIAMS, KEVIN	DAL 1000	825	NEW ORLEANS	1310
426	CROSS, HOWARD	NYG 1000	526	JACKSON, MICHAEL	BAL 2390	557	BLACKWELL, WILL	PIT 1600	588	DAVEY, LAWRENCE	MIA 1000	826	DETROIT	1280
427	JOHNSON, ERIC	DAL 1000	527	REED, ANDRE	BUF 2370	558	KENT, JOEY	HOU 1600	589	HOWARD, DESMOND	OAK 1000	827	CINCINNATI	1170
428	CASH, KEITH	KC 1000	528	JOHNSON, KEYSAWN	NYJ 2360	559	LOCKETT, KEVIN	KC 1600	590	MUHAMMAD, MUHSIN	CAR 1000	828	ATLANTA	1000
429	WEST, ED	ATL 1000	529	EARLY, QUINN	BUF 2350	560	JEFFRIES, HAYWOOD	NO 1590	591	MARTIN, KELVIN	DAL 1000	829	BALTIMORE	1000
430	BRADY, KYLE	NYJ 1000	530	HARRISON, MARVIN	IND 2330	561	JOHNSON, CHARLES	PIT 1590	592	INGRAM, MARK	PHI 1000	830	NEW YORK JETS	1000
431	BRUENER, MARK	PIT 1000	531	SANDERS, CHRIS	HOU 2220	562	BRISBY, VINCENT	NE 1510	593	HOBBS, DARYL	RAI 1000			

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STARTING LINEUP

POS	NUM	PLAYER	Value
K			
K			
K			
QB			
QB			
QB			
RB			
RB			
RB			
RB			
RB			
TE			
TE			
WR			
WR			
WR			
WR			
WR			
DEF/SP			
DEF/SP			

Starting

Lineup

VALUE \$

(cannot exceed \$60,000,000)

BENCH

NUM	Player	VALUE
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		

TEAM OWNER INFORMATION

(Street) _____
Name _____
Team Name _____
Address _____
City _____ St. _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
MC/VISA _____
Expires _____
E-Mail Address _____
First Entry Fee _____ \$49.95
Additional Entries City _____ x \$39.95 = _____
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Weekly Reports City _____ x \$10.00 = _____
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Have you played a CDM game before? _____

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Targets

Where today's
players stand
among the NFL's
all-time greats.

active players in 1996 in caps

TOUCHDOWNS

JERRY RICE	165
MARCUS ALLEN	134
Jim Brown	126
Walter Payton	125
John Riggins	116
EMMITT SMITH	115
Lenny Moore	113
Don Hutson	105
Steve Largent	101
Franco Harris	100
Eric Dickerson	96
Jim Taylor	93



BARRY SANDERS

BARRY SANDERS	91
Tony Dorsett	91
Bobby Mitchell	91
Leroy Kelly	90
Charley Taylor	90
Don Maynard	88
Lance Alworth	87
Ottis Anderson	86
Paul Warfield	86
Mark Clayton	85
Tommy McDonald	85
HERSCHEL WALKER	82
Pete Johnson	82
Art Powell	82
James Brooks	79
Harold Carmichael	79
Frank Gifford	78
Fred Biletnikoff	77
Steve Van Buren	77
Harold Jackson	76
James Lofton	76

POINTS

George Blanda	2,002
NICK LOWERY	1,711
Jan Stenerud	1,699
GARY ANDERSON	1,556
MORTEN ANDERSEN	1,537

Eddie Murray	1,473
Pat Leahy	1,470
NORM JOHNSON	1,452
Jim Turner	1,439
Matt Bahr	1,422
Mark Moseley	1,382
Jim Bakken	1,380
Fred Cox	1,365
Lou Groza	1,349
Jim Breech	1,246
Chris Bahr	1,213
KEVIN BUTLER	1,175
Gino Cappelletti	1,130
Ray Wersching	1,122
AL DEL GRECO	1,111
Don Cockroft	1,080
Garo Yepremian	1,074
Bruce Gossett	1,031
JERRY RICE	994
Sam Baker	977
Rafael Septien	960
Lou Michaels	955
Fuad Reveiz	931
CHIP LOHMILLER	913
Roy Gerela	903
Bobby Walston	881
Tony Zendejas	874
Tony Franklin	872
Pete Gogolak	863
PETE STOYANOVICH	859

TOUCHDOWN PASSES

DAN MARINO	369
Fran Tarkenton	342
Johnny Unitas	290
Joe Montana	273
DAVE KRIEG	261
Sonny Jurgensen	255
WARREN MOON	254
Dan Fouts	254
JOHN ELWAY	251
John Hadl	244
Len Dawson	239
JIM KELLY	237
George Blanda	236
BOOMER ESIASON	234
John Brodie	214
Terry Bradshaw	212
Y.A. Tittle	212
Jim Hart	209
JIM EVERETT	202
Roman Gabriel	201
Phil Simms	199
Ken Anderson	197
Joe Ferguson	196
Bobby Layne	196

Norm Snead	196
Ken Stabler	194
Steve DeBerg	193
Bob Griese	192
Sammy Baugh	187

INTERCEPTIONS

Paul Krause	81
Emlen Tunnell	79
Dick Lane	68
Ken Riley	65
Ronnie Lott	63
Dave Brown	62
Dick LeBeau	62
Emmitt Thomas	58
Mel Blount	57
Bobby Boyd	57
Johnny Robinson	57
Everson Walls	57
Lem Barney	56
Pat Fischer	56
Willie Brown	54
Jack Butler	52
Bobby Dillon	52
Jimmy Patton	52
Mel Renfro	52
Larry Wilson	52
Bobby Bryant	51
Donnie Shell	51

RECEPTIONS

JERRY RICE	1050
Art Monk	940
Steve Largent	819
HENRY ELLARD	775
ANDRE REED	766
James Lofton	764
Charlie Joiner	750
Gary Clark	699
CRIS CARTER	667
Ozzie Newsome	662
IRVING FRYAR	650
Charley Taylor	649
Drew Hill	634
Don Maynard	633
Raymond Berry	631
Sterling Sharpe	595
MICHAEL IRVIN	591
Harold Carmichael	590
Fred Biletnikoff	589
BILL BROOKS	583
Mark Clayton	582
Harold Jackson	579
MARCUS ALLEN	576
Ernest Givins	571
ANDRE RISON	569
Lionel Taylor	567

Roger Craig	566
KEITH BYARS	564
RONNIE HARMON	563
Wes Chandler	559
Roy Green	559
Stanley Morgan	557
WEBSTER SLAUGHTER	555
Eric Martin	553
ANTHONY MILLER	549
John L. Williams	545
J.T. Smith	544
Lance Alworth	542
Kellen Winslow	541
John Stallworth	537
HAYWOOD JEFFRIES	535
BRIAN BLADES	526
Bobby Mitchell	521
Al Toon	517

PASSING YARDAGE

DAN MARINO	51,636
Fran Tarkenton	47,003
JOHN ELWAY	45,034
WARREN MOON	43,787
Dan Fouts	43,040
Joe Montana	40,551
Johnny Unitas	40,239
DAVE KRIEG	37,946
BOOMER ESIASON	36,442
JIM KELLY	35,467
Jim Hart	34,665
JIM EVERETT	34,380
Steve DeBerg	33,872
John Hadl	33,503
Phil Simms	33,462
Ken Anderson	32,838
Sonny Jurgensen	32,224
John Brodie	31,548
Norm Snead	30,797
Joe Ferguson	29,817
Roman Gabriel	29,444
Len Dawson	28,711
Y.A. Tittle	28,339
Ron Jaworski	28,190
Terry Bradshaw	27,989
Ken Stabler	27,938
Craig Morton	27,908
Joe Namath	27,663
George Blanda	26,920
Steve Grogan	26,886
Bobby Layne	26,768
VINNY TESTAVERDE	26,252
STEVE YOUNG	25,479
Joe Theismann	25,206
Ken O'Brien	25,094
Bob Griese	25,092



JERRY RICE

RUSHING YARDAGE

Walter Payton	16,726
Eric Dickerson	13,259
Tony Dorsett	12,739
Jim Brown	12,312
Franco Harris	12,120
MARCUS ALLEN	11,738
BARRY SANDERS	11,725
John Riggins	11,352
O.J. Simpson	11,236
THURMAN THOMAS	10,762
Ottis Anderson	10,273
EMMITT SMITH	10,160
Earl Campbell	9,407
Jim Taylor	8,597
Joe Perry	8,378
HERSCHEL WALKER	8,205
Roger Craig	8,189
Gerald Riggs	8,188
Larry Csonka	8,081
Freeman McNeil	8,074
James Brooks	7,962
EARNEST BYNER	7,948
Mike Pruitt	7,378
Leroy Kelly	7,274
George Rogers	7,176

MARCUS ALLEN



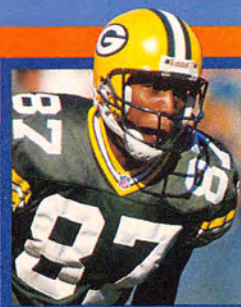
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PLAYERS

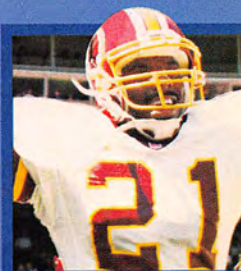
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INSIDE

Robert Brooks
Is Coming Back!



Terry Allen:
Keeping the
Throttle Open



Little Scholars
of the Gridiron



Players,
Celebrities
& Happenings



The real
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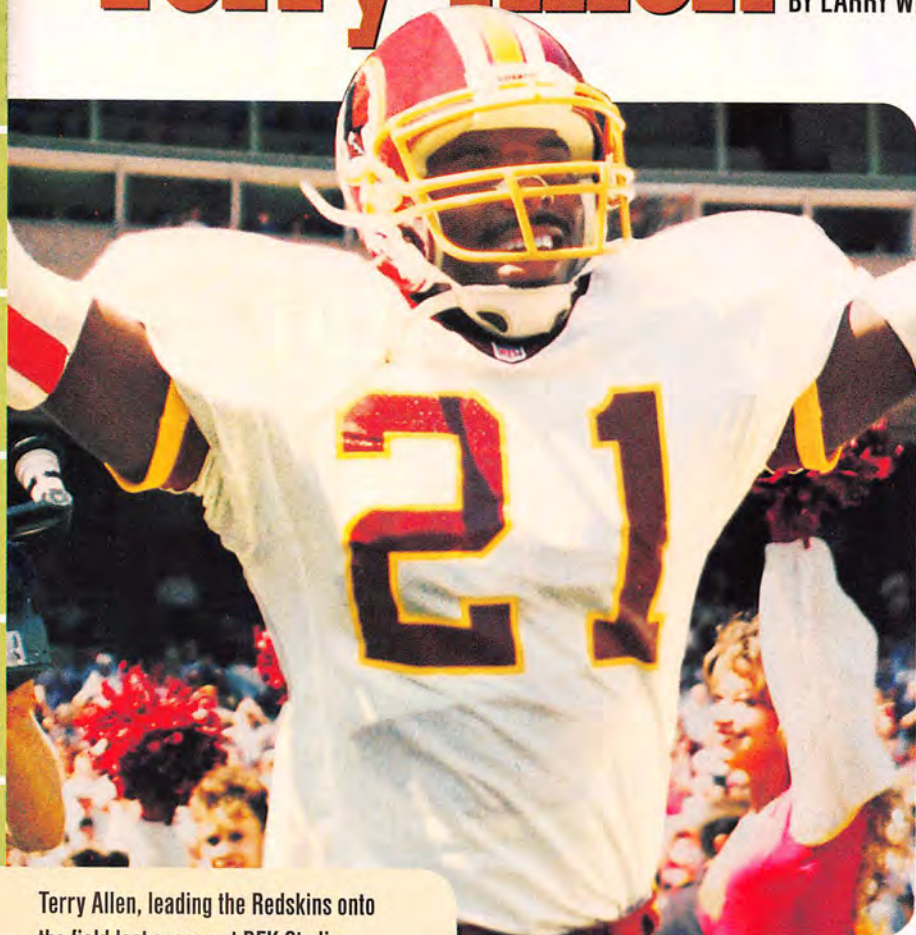


PLAYERS

keeping the throttle open

Terry Allen

BY LARRY WEISMAN



Terry Allen, leading the Redskins onto the field last season at RFK Stadium.

Terry Allen straps the helmet on, revs the engine, exults in the feeling of power.

He does that off the field, too.

Perhaps it's the trademark of Washington's Pro Bowl running back and driving force. Between the lines, one Sunday after the next, he cranks out yard after

end, no goals or goal lines in sight.

Growing up in Commerce, Georgia, he learned to work on automobile engines from his uncles and roared around the red clay on dirt bikes. When he played for the Minnesota Vikings in the early '90s, he fell in with a fast crowd—long snapper Mike Morris and defensive tackle Henry Thomas, two true motorcycle enthusiasts.

"I always enjoyed riding bikes," Allen

Allen, who bounced back from reconstructive surgeries on both knees, sets a tone.

yard and touchdown after touchdown for the Skins, his legs the proverbial pumping pistons. Away from the game, there's nothing he likes better than to climb aboard his Harley-Davidson, feel that 1,200 CC motor rumble, and ride without

says. "But instead of riding the minibikes, I decided to get a big cruiser bike."

He rode a 750 for a while and found himself as hooked on the feel of power as his teammates.

"I really enjoyed riding that," he

says. "From there I went on and got the Harley. That was the one I always wanted."

Speed, acceleration, power. No wonder Allen finds contentment in those elements. On the field, he uses them to crash into and through would-be tacklers and cover small bits of turf at a time. Off the field, he's rumbling in top gear, and no one can stop him.

"You've got this beautiful machine underneath you, with all this power. You're just sitting on top of heaven," Allen says with a faraway look that eases into a smile as he enumerates the simple pleasures of riding.

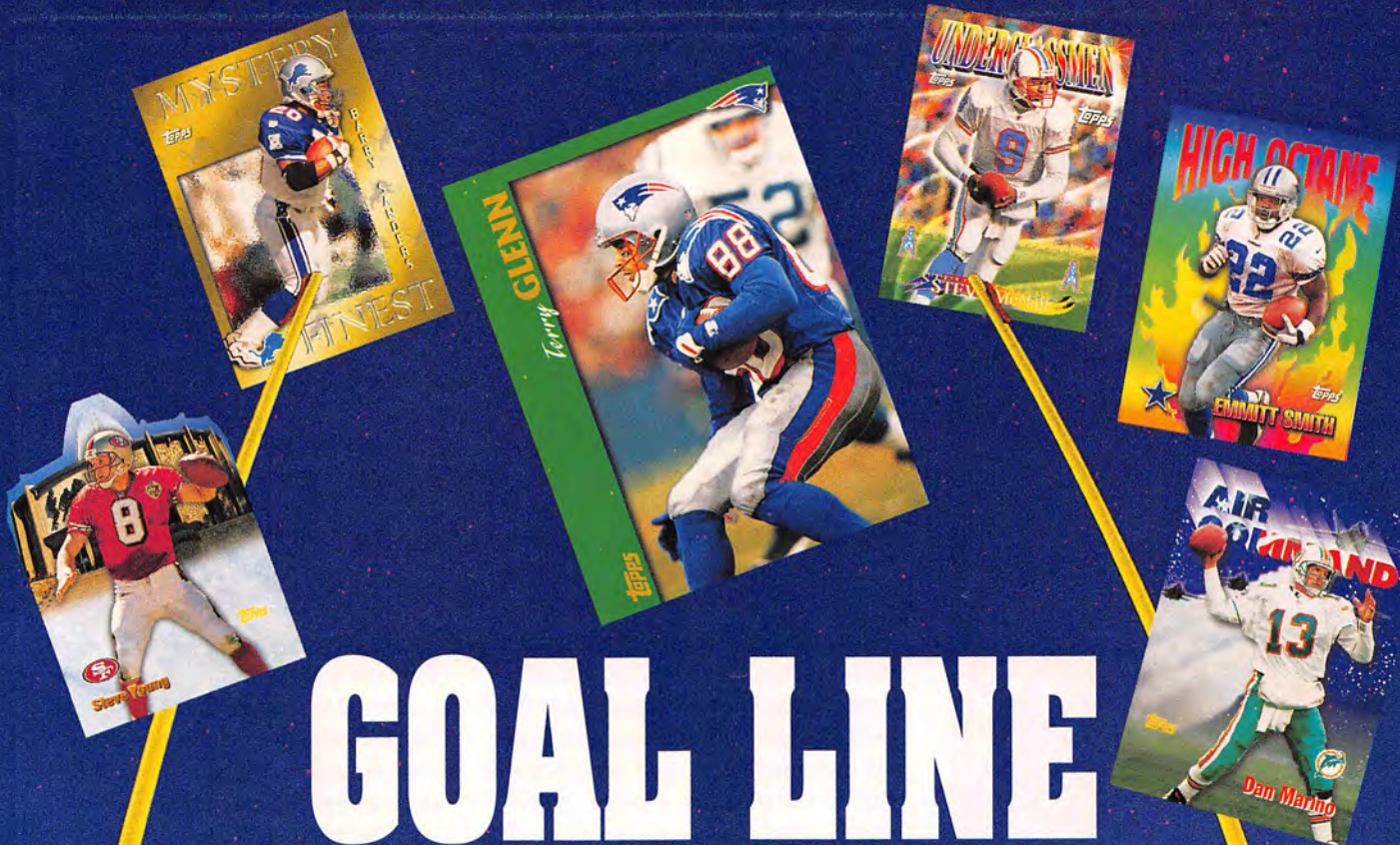
"Just getting out, seeing the road, seeing the countryside, just concentrating on my motorcycle, just me, the bike, and the road," he says. "Of course, I'm paying attention to traffic, but I don't have to think about anything else but what's bothering me at the time, and I can work it out."

There's a solitude on the bike that he loves, that he wants desperately to maintain. Where some players, after their first Pro Bowl trip in seven NFL seasons, might hanker for the limelight, Allen, 29, recoils at the very idea of publicity and celebrity.

"I like my privacy. I enjoy being able to go sit down and have a meal and not have to worry about people coming over wanting autographs. Deion Sanders can't do that. Emmitt Smith can't do that. Deion probably couldn't go to Alaska and eat and not be bothered," he says.

Low visibility in the public eye doesn't mean he disappears in the locker room. No, he won't give rah-rah speeches. But he'll needle others who ought to spend more time in the weight room and he lets his own work habits serve as a standard.

"He doesn't say a lot, but that's not a negative. Sometimes guys who talk ▶



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Look out, Armani! A dapper Terry Allen addresses the audience at one of the Redskins' luncheons.

► continued from page 18

a lot are not leaders. He's got his own leadership style and he's effective with it," says Redskins general manager Charley Casserly. "His leadership comes first from how he plays on the field. That inspires the players around him and gains the respect of all of them for what he does for this football team."

As a season progresses and the aches

and pains pile up, the guys who answer the bell every day make the real difference. Allen, who bounced back from reconstructive surgeries on both knees, sets a tone.

"The No. 1 thing is that this is a game of mental and physical toughness, and Terry just exudes that," says Washington coach Norv Turner. "In each of the last two years, he has, at times, been on the field playing hurt, practicing hurt.

He's a great example for young players. We're probably three or four players—players who are as physically and mentally tough as Terry—from taking that next step toward being a consistent, competitive, playoff-type team."

Away from the game, there's nothing he likes better than to climb aboard his Harley-Davidson, and ride without end, no goal lines in sight.

The Redskins shocked the football world last season when they left rubber at the starting line and won seven of their first eight games. But they couldn't sustain their momentum and veered off the road to the playoffs, though their 9-7 record ended a three-year streak of sub-.500 marks.

Washington, 3-13 in Turner's first season, improved to 6-10 in 1995, Allen's first year with the club. Cut by penurious Minnesota after the 1994 season (in which he rushed for 1,031 yards and eight touchdowns), Allen signed with the Skins and helped them double their win total by pounding out 1,309 yards.

He eclipsed that, and the long-standing club record of 1,347 rushing yards, set by Washington legend John Riggins, in '96 with 1,353 and also scored 21 touchdowns. The Redskins rewarded him handsomely in March with a four-year contract that made him the second-

ly gaining experience, and I think that will carry them in the second half of this year," Allen says. "I'm sure we're going to come out on fire again. This time, we've just got to hold on and not fall apart."

The early lift might come from the

team's move into Jack Kent Cooke Stadium in a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. There, 78,600 loyalists can root for their favorites in up-to-date comfort, though two grand pieces of Redskins lore now fade into history.

The first is RFK, that bandbox of a stadium that practically put the fans on top of the players.


"There's so much tradition in that stadium. When you walk in there, you feel it. I'm going to miss that," Allen says.

And the driving force behind the new stadium, longtime Skins owner Jack Kent Cooke, also is no more. Cooke died last spring at 84, with his stadium about 50 percent complete and on schedule.

Allen flew in from his off-season home in Georgia for Cooke's funeral in Virginia. He had met Cooke several times and recalls the late owner as "an interesting person who pretty much dictated the conversation. I'm really sorry he's not going to get to see his team play in his stadium."

Married for six years, the father of two daughters, Allen says it's his little girls who keep him playing.

"I want them to have the best they can possibly have in life. After the way things happened in Minnesota, I probably would have hung it up," he says. "If it wasn't for those two little girls enjoying watching Daddy play ball, I probably would have shut it down."

Good thing he kept the throttle open. This engine has plenty of good miles left in it. 

highest-paid running back in the game, behind Emmitt Smith. Allen then rewarded himself with a Ferrari.

Who knows what he might want if the club continues to progress toward its goal of re-establishing the glory of its recent past? He'd be happy to start with a chance at a Super Bowl ring.

"I expect we will have a much better team in 1997. We had a lot of young guys who had to play last year and were real-

Larry Weisman has covered pro football for *USA Today* for 18 years.



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**Download a free demo,
get program and rosters
updates each week during
preseason, and much more!
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www.fspi.com

Fantasy Sports Properties, Inc.—
The makers of *Grant Hill Fantasy Basketball*,
Cal Ripken, Jr. Fantasy Baseball, *Fantasy Hockey*, and *Fantasy Golf*.

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PLAYERS **INC.**

Draft Your Team and Compete For Your Share Of **\$150,000** in Total Cash & Prizes

- \$15,000 Grand Prize
- VIP Trip to the Super Bowl for Two

NFL Players Fantasy Football
is the Official Game of
NFL Players

TOP 6 PLAYERS IN EACH LEAGUE WILL BE INVITED TO PLAY IN THE MASTERS LEVEL CHALLENGE DURING SECOND HALF OF SEASON FOR ADDITIONAL CASH PRIZES

Easy to Play

Select your team of 11 players and 1 Defense/Special Team using a salary cap less than or equal to \$420.

Roster

Your team consists of:

- 2 Quarterbacks • 3 Running Backs • 4 Receivers
- 2 Kickers • 1 Defense/Special Team
- Each team must consist of 12 players to qualify.
- Only players on the official entry form are eligible for your initial roster. Additional players will be provided in your game kit for trading.
- 4 salary upgrades will occur throughout the season in which 5 players' values will be increased based on performance (1 QB, 1 RB, 1 Rec, 1 PK, 1 Def/ST).

League Information

- All teams will be placed in 25-team leagues, and all leagues will be placed in 1 of 8 regions. League formation will occur after week 2.
- All entries (up to 25) that are received in the same envelope will be placed in the same league unless otherwise instructed.
- All teams compete for the overall national grand prize.
- Top 6 players from each league through week 8, will be invited to play in a supplemental Masters Level Challenge for additional cash prizes.

Reports

- Reports are available on a weekly or bi-monthly basis. All participants will be mailed bi-monthly reports, which are included in your entry fee.
- Reports are accessible via the Internet or by fax. Please call for details concerning fax services.

Entry Deadlines

- Entries accepted via the Internet (www.fantasysportshq.com) or by fax (972-868-1662) must be received no later than August 30, 1997.
- Entries received by mail must be postmarked by August 30, 1997 and received no later than September 5, 1997 to qualify.
- Late entries must be received by September 12, 1997 to qualify.
- Best 15 of 17 weekly scores count toward end of season total.

Prize Structure

- Prizes are awarded on League, Regional and National Levels.
- 1 in 25 will earn a 4 Day/3 Night Vacation to 1 of 20 resort location destinations. Weekly prizes awarded to the Top 20 national winners each week. Weeks 3 through end of season are eligible for Highest Single Week prize.

1 OUT OF 3 WIN!

Salary Upgrades

- At each position, 1 player's salary will be upgraded \$5 based on season-to-date average score divided by his salary.
- Player must be featured on active roster in weeks 5, 8, 11 & 14.

Cost to Play

- Entry fee for game play is \$49.95
- 2 or more entries included in the same envelope all qualify for an entry fee of \$39.95.
- International entries accepted. All fees must be paid in U.S. funds only. For Canadian, Mexican and overseas entries, please add \$15 to cover additional mailing costs.

Cost to Trade

- Player trades are unlimited at \$2.50 per trade.
- Players may only be traded for another within the same position.
- Trades may be conducted each week from Tuesday at 3:00 pm CST until Sunday at 10:00 am CST. Exceptions for Thur. & Sat. games.
- All Entries received by August 11, 1997 receive 5 FREE trades.
- All trades prior to August 31, 1997 are FREE.

EASY TO WIN PRIZES

End of Season Grand Prizes - GUARANTEED

1st:	\$15,000	5th:	\$750
2nd:	\$5,000	6th-10th:	\$500
3rd:	\$2,000	11th-20th:	\$150
4th:	\$1,000	21st-50th:	\$75

Highest Single Week

VIP Trip for 2 to Super Bowl XXXII in San Diego, CA

End of Season Regional Prizes

1st: \$500 2nd: \$250 3rd: \$100

End of Season League Prizes

1st: 4 Day/3 Night Drive Away Vacation 2nd: \$75 3rd: \$50
Choose from San Francisco, Orlando, Hilton Head, Durango, Las Vegas or 15 other destination resort locations.
\$20 discount on future games for Top 10 in each league.

Weekly Prizes

1st-10th: Great Merchandise 11th-20th: 3 Free Trades
Weekly Leader Board featured on Playoff Fantasy Football Weekly.

SCORING
BONUS

PASSING	PTS.	KICKING	PTS.
Pass for TD 40+ yds	6	Field Goal 40+ yds	6
Pass for TD <40 yds	3	Field Goal <40 yds	3
Every 50 yds	2	Extra Point	1
Pass for 2 pt conv	1		
RUSH/RECEIVE	PTS.	DEF/SPECIAL TEAMS	PTS.
Rush/receive TD 40+ yds	9	Defense TD	6
Rush/receive TD <40 yds	6	Kick/Punt Return TD	6
Every 25 yds	2	Fum Rec/Int	2
2 pt conv	2	Safety	2
		Sack	1

• Only best 15 of 17 weekly scores will count toward end of season total.

WHY ENTER EARLY?

Entries received by 8/11/97 get
5 FREE TRADES (a \$12.50 Value)

- Get your Game Kit by the beginning of the season - GUARANTEED!
- Game Kit includes list of complete NFL rosters, schedules and report guides for use with Interactive Commissioner.
- Access the Interactive Commissioner earlier for expert tips and player profiles.
- Get a jump on your competition. All trades prior to August 31, 1997 are FREE!

Unlimited Trades • \$2.50 each
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Norm Hitzges Kevin Eschenfelder

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- ◆ Tune in to see Top 10 Leader Board every week.

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As seen on Fox Sports Net the week of August 10, 1997.
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QUARTERBACKS (Draft 2)																							
<input type="checkbox"/>	100	Aikman, Troy (DAL)	\$39	<input type="checkbox"/>	319	Fletcher, Terrell (SD)	21	<input type="checkbox"/>	519	Fryar, Irving (PHI)	47	<input type="checkbox"/>	549	Moore, Rob (ARZ)	31	<input type="checkbox"/>	707	Carney, John (SD)	38	<input type="checkbox"/>	905	Chicago	40
<input type="checkbox"/>	101	Banks, Tony (STL)	38	<input type="checkbox"/>	320	George, Eddie (HOU)	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	520	Galloway, Joey (SEA)	44	<input type="checkbox"/>	550	Morton, Johnny (DET)	31	<input type="checkbox"/>	708	Christie, Steve (BUF)	33	<input type="checkbox"/>	906	Cincinnati	32
<input type="checkbox"/>	102	Blake, Jeff (CIN)	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	321	Green, Harold (STL)	27	<input type="checkbox"/>	521	Glenn, Terry (NE)	38	<input type="checkbox"/>	551	Moulds, Eric (BUF)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	709	Daluisio, Brad (NYG)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	907	Dallas	32
<input type="checkbox"/>	103	Bledsoe, Drew (NE)	49	<input type="checkbox"/>	322	Hampton, Rodney (NYG)	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	522	Gonzalez, Tony (R)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	552	Penn, Chris (KC)	24	<input type="checkbox"/>	710	Del Greco, Al (HOU)	42	<input type="checkbox"/>	908	Denver	32
<input type="checkbox"/>	104	Bono, Steve (GB)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	323	Hanspard, Byron (R)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	523	Graham, Jeff (NYJ)	34	<input type="checkbox"/>	553	Perkinson, Brett (DET)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	711	Elam, Jason (DEN)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	909	Detroit	26
<input type="checkbox"/>	105	Brown, Dave (NYG)	31	<input type="checkbox"/>	324	Harris, Ronnie (HOU)	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	524	Green, Yatil (R)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	554	Pickens, Carl (CIN)	52	<input type="checkbox"/>	712	Ford, Chris (OAK)	34	<input type="checkbox"/>	910	Green Bay	30
<input type="checkbox"/>	106	Brunell, Mark (JAC)	55	<input type="checkbox"/>	325	Harris, Ramont (CHI)	33	<input type="checkbox"/>	525	Harrison, Marvin (IND)	34	<input type="checkbox"/>	555	Reed, Andre (BUF)	41	<input type="checkbox"/>	713	Hanson, Jason (DET)	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	911	Houston	31
<input type="checkbox"/>	107	Chandler, Chris (ATL)	33	<input type="checkbox"/>	326	Hearst, Garrison (SF)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	526	Hastings, Andre (PIT)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	556	Reed, Jake (MIN)	46	<input type="checkbox"/>	714	Hollis, Michael (JAC)	37	<input type="checkbox"/>	912	Indianapolis	39
<input type="checkbox"/>	108	Collins, Kerry (CAR)	32	<input type="checkbox"/>	327	Hill, Greg (KC)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	527	Haynes, Michael (NO)	28	<input type="checkbox"/>	557	Rice, Jerry (SF)	47	<input type="checkbox"/>	715	Husted, Michael (TB)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	913	Jacksonville	27
<input type="checkbox"/>	109	Collins, Todd (BUF)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	328	Hoard, Leroy (MIN)	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	528	Hilliard, Ike (R)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	558	Rison, Andre (FRA)	22	<input type="checkbox"/>	716	Jacke, Chris (GB)	36	<input type="checkbox"/>	914	Kansas City	30
<input type="checkbox"/>	110	Detmer, Ty (PHI)	37	<input type="checkbox"/>	329	Holmes, Derrek (BUF)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	529	Irvin, Michael (DAL)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	559	Sanders, Chris (HOU)	36	<input type="checkbox"/>	717	Jaeger, Jeff (CHI)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	915	Miami	40
<input type="checkbox"/>	111	Diller, Trent (TB)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	330	Johnson, Anthony (CAR)	42	<input type="checkbox"/>	530	Ismail, Raghib (CAR)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	560	Sanders, Frank (ARZ)	26	<input type="checkbox"/>	718	Johnson, Norm (PIT)	34	<input type="checkbox"/>	916	Minnesota	37
<input type="checkbox"/>	112	Druckenmiller, Jim (R)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	331	Johnson, LeShawn (ARZ)	31	<input type="checkbox"/>	531	Jackson, Michael (BAL)	53	<input type="checkbox"/>	561	Scott, Darney (CIN)	31	<input type="checkbox"/>	719	Kasay, John (CAR)	46	<input type="checkbox"/>	917	New England	39
<input type="checkbox"/>	113	Elway, John (DEN)	49	<input type="checkbox"/>	332	Kaufman, Napoleon (OAK)	27	<input type="checkbox"/>	532	Jefferson, Shawn (NE)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	562	Sharpe, Shannon (DEN)	43	<input type="checkbox"/>	720	Lohmiller, Chip (STL)	29	<input type="checkbox"/>	918	New Orleans	24
<input type="checkbox"/>	114	Erickson, Craig (MIA)	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	333	Kirby, Terry (SF)	32	<input type="checkbox"/>	533	Jett, James (OAK)	24	<input type="checkbox"/>	563	Smith, Jimmy (JAC)	44	<input type="checkbox"/>	721	Lowery, Nick (FRA)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	919	NY Giants	40
<input type="checkbox"/>	115	Esionson, Boomer (FRA)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	334	Lee, Amp (MIN)	17	<input type="checkbox"/>	534	Johnson, Charles (PIT)	34	<input type="checkbox"/>	564	Stokes, J.J. (SF)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	722	Nedney, Joe (MIA)	28	<input type="checkbox"/>	920	NY Jets	36
<input type="checkbox"/>	116	Everett, Jim (NO)	33	<input type="checkbox"/>	335	Levens, Dorsey (GB)	36	<input type="checkbox"/>	535	Johnson, Keyshawn (NYJ)	34	<input type="checkbox"/>	565	Tasker, Steve (BUF)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	723	Pelfrey, Doug (CIN)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	921	Oakland	20
<input type="checkbox"/>	117	Favre, Brett (GB)	59	<input type="checkbox"/>	336	Loville, Derrick (SF)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	536	Jones, Charlie (SD)	22	<input type="checkbox"/>	566	Thigpen, Yancy (PIT)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	724	Peterson, Todd (SEA)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	922	Philadelphia	41
<input type="checkbox"/>	118	Freatte, Gus (WAS)	39	<input type="checkbox"/>	337	Martin, Curtis (NE)	54	<input type="checkbox"/>	537	Jones, Chris T (PHI)	29	<input type="checkbox"/>	567	Wallis, Wessley (CAR)	34	<input type="checkbox"/>	725	Sisson, Scott (MIN)	31	<input type="checkbox"/>	923	Pittsburgh	42
<input type="checkbox"/>	119	Friesz, John (SEA)	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	338	McElroy, Leland (ARZ)	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	538	Kennison, Eddie (STL)	43	<input type="checkbox"/>	568	Westbrook, Michael (WAS)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	726	Stover, Matt (BAL)	29	<input type="checkbox"/>	924	San Diego	34
<input type="checkbox"/>	120	George, Jeff (OAK)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	339	Means, Natron (JAC)	18	<input type="checkbox"/>	539	LaFleur, David (R)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	569	Wycheck, Frank (HOU)	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	727	Stoyanovich, Pete (KC)	27	<input type="checkbox"/>	925	San Francisco	39
<input type="checkbox"/>	121	Graham, Kent (ARZ)	23	<input type="checkbox"/>	340	Morris, Bam (BAL)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	540	Lewis, Thomas (NYG)	23	KICKERS (Draft 2)				<input type="checkbox"/>	728	Vinatieri, Adam (NE)	38	<input type="checkbox"/>	926	Seattle	36
<input type="checkbox"/>	122	Grbac, Elvis (KC)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	341	Morrell, Adrian (NYJ)	18	<input type="checkbox"/>	541	Martin, Tony (SD)	52	<input type="checkbox"/>	700	Andersen, Morton (ATL)	\$31	<input type="checkbox"/>	729	Wilkins, Jeff (STL)	41	<input type="checkbox"/>	927	St. Louis	37
<input type="checkbox"/>	123	Harbaugh, Jim (IND)	36	<input type="checkbox"/>	342	Neal, Lorenzo (ATL)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	542	Mathis, Terrance (ATL)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	701	Anderson, Gary (FRA)	37	DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS (Draft 1)				<input type="checkbox"/>	928	Tampa Bay	29
<input type="checkbox"/>	124	Hebert, Bobby (ATL)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	343	Phillips, Lawrence (STL)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	543	McCaffery, Eddie (DEN)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	702	Blanchard, Gary (IND)	43	<input type="checkbox"/>	900	Arizona	\$27	<input type="checkbox"/>	929	Washington	31
<input type="checkbox"/>	125	Hostetler, Jeff (OAK)	44	<input type="checkbox"/>	344	Rhett, Eric (TB)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	544	McCardell, Keenan (JAC)	32	<input type="checkbox"/>	703	Blanton, Scott (WAS)	38	<input type="checkbox"/>	901	Atlanta	25	Customer Service Hours:			
<input type="checkbox"/>	126	Humphries, Stan (SD)	37	<input type="checkbox"/>	345	Russell, Leonard (FRA)	33	<input type="checkbox"/>	545	McDuffie, OJ (MIA)	36	<input type="checkbox"/>	704	Baniol, Chris (PHI)	38	<input type="checkbox"/>	902	Baltimore	24	M-F 8am to 8pm CST, Sat 9am to 1pm CST			
<input type="checkbox"/>	127	Johnson, Brad (MIN)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	346	Salaam, Rasham (CHI)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	546	Metcalf, Eric (ATL)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	705	Brien, Doug (NO)	26	<input type="checkbox"/>	903	Buffalo	34	(972) 402-4580			
<input type="checkbox"/>	128	Krieg, Dave (HOU)	32	<input type="checkbox"/>	347	Sanders, Barry (DET)	53	<input type="checkbox"/>	547	Miller, Anthony (DEN)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	706	Butler, Kevin (ARZ)	19	<input type="checkbox"/>	904	Carolina	43				
<input type="checkbox"/>	129	Marino, Dan (MIA)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	348	Smith, Antowain (R)	25	<input type="checkbox"/>	548	Moore, Herman (DET)	49												
<input type="checkbox"/>	130	McNair, Steve (HOU)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	349	Smith, Emmitt (DAL)	52																
<input type="checkbox"/>	131	Mirer, Rick (CHI)	22	<input type="checkbox"/>	350	Smith, Leonard (SEA)	31																
<input type="checkbox"/>	132	Mitchell, Scott (DET)	45	<input type="checkbox"/>	351	Smith, Robert (MIN)	35																
<input type="checkbox"/>	133	Moon, Warren (SEA)	20	<input type="checkbox"/>	352	Stewart, James (JAC)	39																
<input type="checkbox"/>	134	O'Donnell, Neil (NYJ)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	353	Thomas, Rodney (HOU)	22																
<input type="checkbox"/>	135	Reich, Frank (DET)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	354	Thomas, Thurman (BUF)	44																
<input type="checkbox"/>	136	Stewart, Kordell (PIT)	35	<input type="checkbox"/>	355	Vardell, Tommy (SF)	20																
<input type="checkbox"/>	137	Testaverde, Vinnie (BAL)	55	<input type="checkbox"/>	356	Warren, Chris (SEA)	38																
<input type="checkbox"/>	138	Tomczak, Mike (PIT)	30	<input type="checkbox"/>	357	Watters, Ricky (PHI)	55																
<input type="checkbox"/>	139	Young, Steve (SF)	40	<input type="checkbox"/>	358	Wheatley, Tyrone (NYG)	25																
<input type="checkbox"/>	140	Zellars, Ray (NO)	19	<input type="checkbox"/>	359	Zellars, Ray (NO)	19																

NOTE: EACH PLAYER'S TEAM DESIGNATION IS BASED ON THEIR TEAM AS OF APRIL 18, 1997.
ENTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR FIRST WEEK MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 8/30/97 AND RECEIVED BY 9/5/97.
ONLY ORIGINAL ENTRIES OR PHOTOCOPIES OF ORIGINAL FORM WILL BE ACCEPTED.

MAIL ENTRY TO: NFL Players Fantasy Football - P.O. Box 142915 - Irving, TX 75014

☐ MR. ☐ MS. PLEASE FILL OUT IN CLEAR, CAPITAL LETTERS Source: 1040

LAST NAME FIRST NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

HOME PHONE

YOUR TEAM NAME

CREDIT CARD NUMBER (Visa, MC, AMEX & Discover accepted.) EXP. DATE

Signature FAXED ENTRIES ACCEPTED AT (972) 889-5359

All payments must be in U.S. Funds. Check, money order or credit card accepted. Make checks payable to NFL Players Fantasy Football.



Prime Sports Interactive. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. To receive an alternative entry, void of all services and/or a copy of the official rules including alternative entry method by sending a letter size, self-addressed stamped envelope to: Alternative Entry, NFL Players Fantasy Football, P.O. Box 142915 Irving, Texas 75014 (WA residents omit return stamp). Limit one entry per household. Requests must be received by August 11, 1997. You must be 18 years or older to participate. Void where prohibited by law. Total prize package based on 250 leagues. Prime Sports Interactive has the right to disqualify any entry not completed correctly or not received by the stated deadline.



Robert Brooks

is coming back

BY BUD LEA

He should have been a hero last January, leaping into the Louisiana Superdome stands after scoring a touchdown, feeling what it fully meant to be a vital part of a championship team, being asked to do interviews, sharing in the celebrations. He should have been flooded with endorsement offers. His face, no doubt, would have been on the box of a breakfast cereal, along with several prominent teammates.

Instead, he found himself at the Super Bowl as a spectator. He was a fan cheering on his teammates from the sidelines, going crazy when Andre Rison, Antonio Freeman, and Desmond Howard scored on those spectacularly big plays. However, the nightmare was that he wasn't a part of it anymore.

He was a star receiver. He had raced through National Football League defenses. His face was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated's* 1996 pro football edition, along with teammates Brett Favre and Reggie White. The one that predicted the Green Bay Packers would be going to Super Bowl XXXI.

He was hailed in Green Bay as the new Sterling Sharpe. Fresh from the obscurity of a backup to the Packers' go-to receiver, he blended his pass-catching skills and physical talent into a team-record 1,497 yards on 102 receptions while scoring 13 touchdowns in 1995. He never looked forward as much to a season as he did to last year.

He was the team's leading receiver going into a Monday night game with the San Francisco 49ers, October 14, at Lambeau Field. He was averaging 15 yards per catch and had scored four touchdowns. He played as if he had four lungs and four legs and could run forever.

The season is long. A million things can happen. Injuries happen, and they never have a benevolent sense of timing.

In a flash, everything ended on that cool, autumn night. Brooks went down on the first play of the game while he was trying to make what looked like a routine block against cornerback Tyrone Drakeford of the 49ers. Locked arm-to-arm with Drakeford, Brooks was

flipped to the ground with his right knee in an awkward position.

Brooks suffered a devastating knee injury. The damage included a ruptured patellar tendon, a torn anterior cruciate ligament, and a torn meniscus cartilage. He had surgery four days later and missed the rest of the season.

His job is his legs. His football career was in jeopardy. You know what they do to injured race horses. How could this be happening to him?

"I knew it was bad just the way it looked," Brooks said. "I had no feeling

Nevertheless, this is the type of serious injury that is unpredictable. Some players might rebound quickly from it. Others could struggle with complications. And some never come back. Everyone said, "You'll be back. You'll be back." All that is superficial and meaningless. He was Robert Brooks. What made them think he wouldn't be back.

He had to show he would not give up to pain and frustration. He had to prove to himself he could overcome the most dreaded injury in football.

One of the team's most popular



Robert Brooks (right), reeling in a "big one" on a *Tuff Stuff* magazine fishing cruise in Hawaii. Do you think he has a second career in sport fishing when his football career is over?

in my knee. It seemed like it was just hanging there.

"When the doctor came out to attend me, I told him to get me off the field so my teammates wouldn't have to see me. As we were going up to the training room, I prayed to God and asked him why this was happening to me.

"God answered me right away. In my mind, God was telling me this was something that was going to happen to a person who could handle it. And the way I was going to handle it was going to touch some other people.

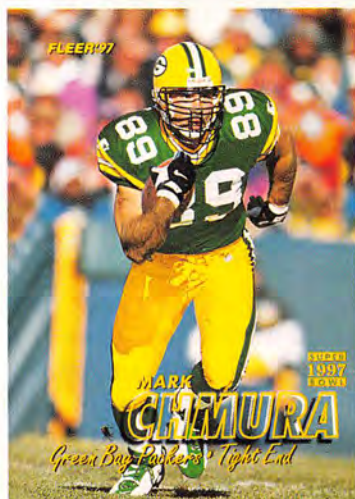
"My doctor laid out a chart for what was a normal approach to this kind of injury and how long it would take a person to come back from it. I decided to cut that time in half."

players with the fans, Brooks received bundles of letters, cards, and calls from people he had never met. One woman sent him a green and gold voodoo doll he could throw at his television screen when the opposing team made a big play against his Packers.

Brooks epitomizes everything one would want in a Green Bay Packer, or a football player, or a professional athlete. He is pleasant to strangers and patient with children. He speaks with intelligence and feeling. ➤

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AUTOGRAPH-FRIENDLY "LEGEND" TEXTURED MATTE FINISH PLUS TWO HIGH-GLOSS, HOBBY-ONLY PARALLEL SETS! Every basic card comes with our one-of-a-kind "Legend" textured matte finish. It lets ink dry quickly, for clear, no-smudge, no-smear autographs. Or, if you prefer a little more dazzle, we have two limited edition parallel sets complete with glittering foil stamping and gleaming UV coating.

Basic Set Size: 450 cards • Hobby Release Date: June 30, 1997

INSERTS:	NO. CARDS/SEEDING RATIO:
Crystal Collection parallel set	1:2 (hobby only)
Tiffany Collection parallel set	1:20 (hobby only)
Decade of Excellence	12 cards; 1:36 (hobby only)
Rookie Sensations	20 cards; 1:4
Game Breakers Supreme	20 cards; 1:18
Thrill Seekers	12 cards; 1:288
'97 Prospects	10 cards; 1:6



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1997 Fleer® Ultra™ NFL® Football

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, GOLD MEDALLION EDITION AND PLATINUM MEDALLION EDITION PARALLEL SETS ARE HOBBY EXCLUSIVE! Ultra NFL '97 captures the heart of the NFL like never before, with the most star-studded player roster, a first look at '97 rookies and new knockout holofoil stamping continued from previous popular 1997 Ultra releases.

Basic Set Size: 173 veterans, 25 rookies and 2 checklists • Hobby Release Date: June 18, 1997

INSERTS:	NO. CARDS/SEEDING RATIO:
Gold Medallion Edition parallel set	198 cards; 1 per pack (Hobby only)
Platinum Medallion Edition parallel set	198 cards; 1:100 (Hobby only; less than 200 of each card produced)
Rookies	12 cards; 1:4
Ultra Rookies (parallel to Rookies)	12 cards; 1:18
Talent Show	10 cards; 1:4
Blitzkrieg	18 cards; 1:6
Ultra Blitzkrieg (parallel to Blitzkrieg)	18 cards; 1:36
Play of the Game	10 cards; 1:8
Sunday School	10 cards; 1:8
Starring Role	10 cards; 1:288



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AVAILABLE ONLY IN HOBBY STORES
Basic Set Size: 90 players, 270 cards • Hobby Release Date: April 30, 1997

INSERTS:	NO. CARDS/SEEDING RATIO:
Hot Shots	20 cards; 1:90
Class of Ninety-Six	20 cards; 1:5
Legacy Collection parallel set	Less than 150 sets produced



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NOTE: Product content subject to change.
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Fleer
WE UNDERSTAND YOUR PASSION.



► continued from page 24

Asked if he could have lunch with anyone and who would it be, Brooks replied he would be honored to have lunch with a little kid who looked up to him.

"I was a young guy who looked up to athletes," he said. "So to sit there and have lunch with him, and show him that I once was a little guy like him, show him that he can do the same thing if he stays focused and does the right thing."

In a "Bring a Packer to School" contest at a grade school in Green Bay last fall, he made a big impression on fourth-graders. One student asked what fans say to him when he leaps into the stands. "They scream all sorts of stuff and I don't understand a word of it," Brooks said.

LeRoy Butler was the first Green Bay player to jump into the stands, after scoring a touchdown against the Los Angeles Raiders at Lambeau Field in 1993. But Brooks definitely perfected it. "I thought it was the best thing in the world," he said,

"I want my job back. I want to get back to jumping in the stands."

explaining his leaps. "If you're a fan and a guy does that, you've got to feel good. You get a chance to celebrate in the touchdown with the guy."

Although playing in the NFL is a dream come true, Brooks said he never took football seriously until he was a high school senior. He thought it would give him a start on a business career.

Of course, what would you expect from a guy whose motto is: Do all you want and become all you can.

He wanted to prove to himself he could graduate early, so he majored in

business at the University of South Carolina and received his degree after 3½ years—just in case the pro football thing didn't work out. He wanted to know about music, so he bought himself a keyboard, taught himself how to play, wrote songs, and today he is the owner of a

He was the team's leading receiver. In a flash, everything ended on that cool autumn night.

very successful recording company, Shoo-in Productions. He wanted to learn about the Internet, so he purchased a computer system and became a whiz at it. He wanted to get behind a mike, so he got himself on a local radio show. He wanted a pet, so he bought a talking-parrot in Hawaii, and the two carry on like old friends at his second home in Green Bay. He wanted to do a soap opera, so he made a cameo appearance on *The Young and the Restless*. He wanted to get more involved in the marketing of NFL players, so he is one of six players serving as spokesmen for Players Inc.

His hobbies include deep-sea fishing, surfing the net, and dancing.

He appreciates fine clothes, fine cars, and fine design. He watches very little TV, and when he does, he watches the Discovery Channel.

His lifestyle as a bachelor, to some,

might be selfish. It's very tempting to say he's scattered himself so much that he can't be committed to anything. But it's amazing how he can shut out distractions and concentrate on one thing at a time. He has all this energy. He always draws on his ample self-confidence. Asked where he gets this supreme confidence, this power of positive thinking, Brooks simply said, "God."

He said he came from a religious background, started questioning things as he grew older, and became skeptical. When his mother learned that Reggie White would be on the team that her son had joined in 1992, she told him to make

sure he became friends with White.

"That's what I did," Brooks said. "I told Reggie I was a Christian and wanted to do well and be a good person, but it's especially hard, being a single man and a professional athlete. That's a lot of pressure. I was struggling with

my religion.

"Reggie told me to sit down and read the Bible. He told me to interpret it with my own mind and not to listen to what someone else would say. He said then God can talk to me. That's the way He talks to you. Now I see things in a different light. I'm not perfect. I still sin. I still do a lot of bad things I used to do. I don't do them as often. I can overcome anything if I pray and work hard at it. I don't care what it is. If I blow my knee out again, I can overcome it again."

Brooks has always been the consummate pro—disciplined, almost monomaniacal in the way he stays in shape. You believe him when he talks. He has confidence that is not teachable.

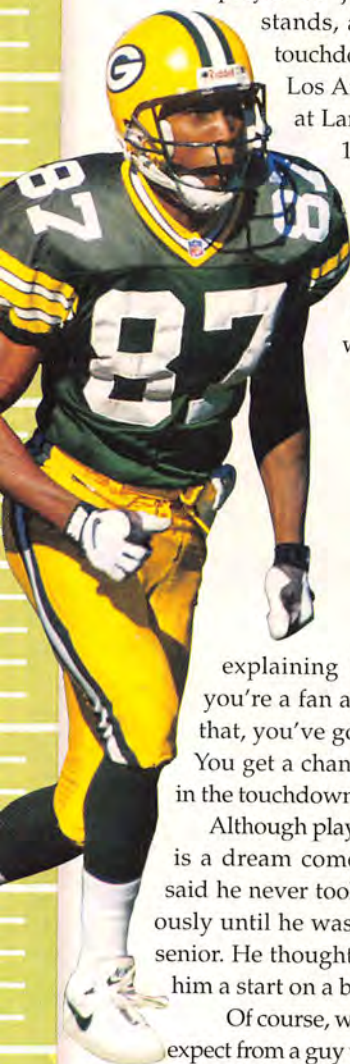
The Packers open the 1997 season on Monday night, September 1, against the Chicago Bears. It will be billed as the "Robert Brooks Comeback." Anything less than a full recovery will always raise a question. Only Brooks can decide what his standards will be. He isn't daunted by what lies ahead.

"My standards will be higher than they have ever been before," he said. "I'm hungry. I have something to push for and that's all I need. I don't need anybody else telling me.

"I got my answer from God from day one. I want my job back. I want to get back and do the things I was doing before and have fun. I want to get back to jumping in the stands, the whole nine yards."

Count on Robert making it all the way back. He's ready. 🍌

Bud Lea has covered the Green Bay Packers for the *Milwaukee Sentinel* for 42 years.



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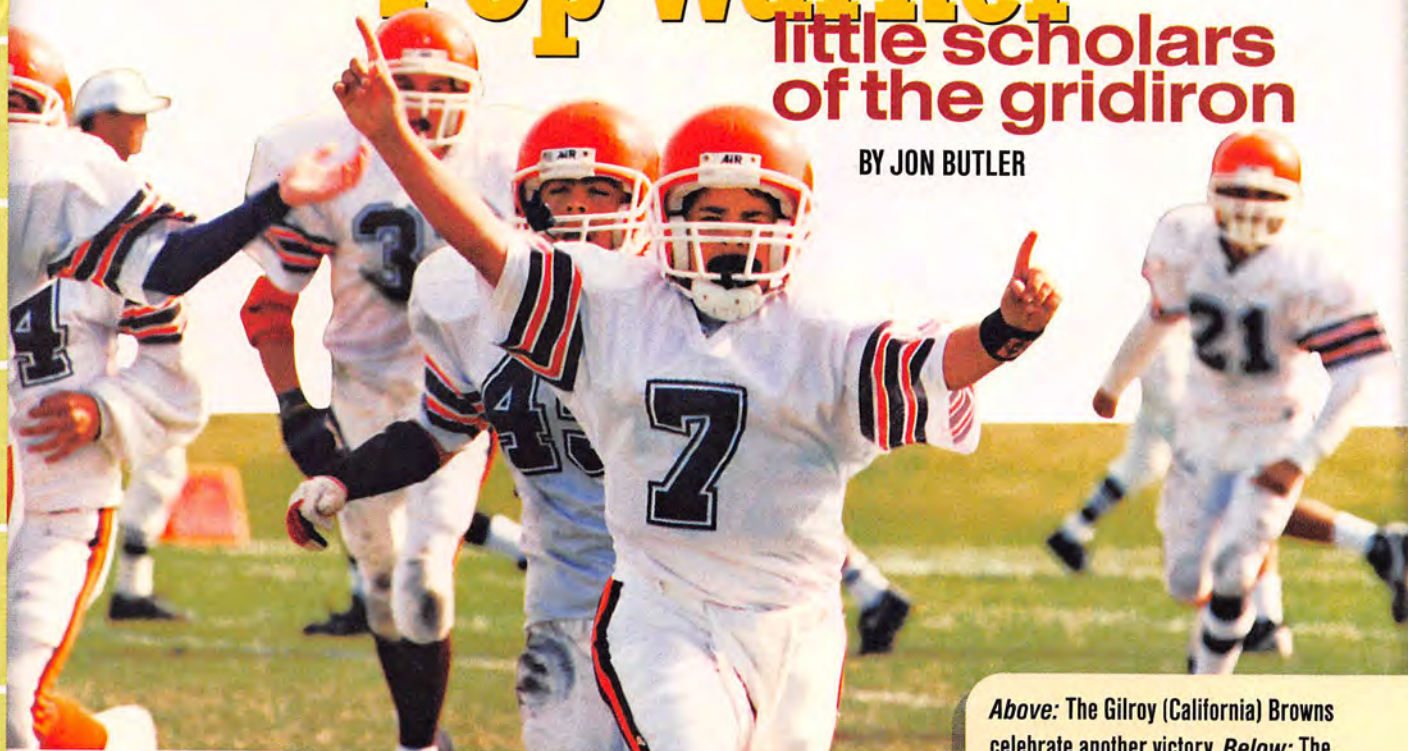


PLAYERS

Pop Warner

little scholars of the gridiron

BY JON BUTLER



Above: The Gilroy (California) Browns celebrate another victory. **Below:** The spirited cheerleaders of the Lake Brantley (Florida) Patriots.

On any given Sunday afternoon in the fall, you might turn on the TV and see Emmitt Smith diving into the end zone for a touchdown. You might see the enjoyment and thrill of competition on his face as he shares in the celebration with his teammates. You also might have seen the pride on Smith's face when he received his diploma from the University of Flor-

ida in 1996. Smith displayed that same enjoyment and pride when he played Pop Warner football.

Emmitt Smith may be one of the most famous Pop Warner alumni, but there are millions of people across the U.S. and around the world who have benefited tremendously from participating in the Pop Warner football and cheerleading program. Pop Warner Little Scholars (PWLS) is an organization based on the principle of combining the fun of athletics with the benefits of education. The organization has helped instill leadership qualities, teamwork, and the ability to overcome adversity in each participant.

Working closely with a number of

on the field and in the classroom.

Pop Warner Little Scholars was founded in 1929 in Philadelphia to provide a wholesome activity to keep children out of trouble. When PWLS was incorporated in 1929, its mission was to teach children that academic skills should be directly connected to their athletic efforts.

Pop Warner is the only national youth football and cheerleading program with leagues in 40 states, plus Japan and Mexico. During the 1996 sea-

Terrell Davis, Eddie George, Emmitt Smith, and John Elway are Pop Warner grads.

corporate partners, including the NFL Players Incorporated, the NFL, Reebok, Disney's Wide World of Sports, US Airways, and Varsity Spirit Corporation, Pop Warner has grown by 50 percent over the past five years. These corporations see the benefit of being involved with young players who work hard both

son, 270,000 boys and girls, ages 5 to 15, participated in Pop Warner. In the past decade, there has been a dramatic and steady growth of Pop Warner participation. Though many observers feel that youth soccer is taking participation away from Pop Warner, it is obvious that the fun of playing football continues to ➤



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AUTOGRAPHED CARD



➤ continued from page 28

fuel an ongoing expansion.

Fun, safety, and education are the three goals of Pop Warner football. Fun is vital from the child's perspective. If the game isn't fun, children won't play. The emphasis in Pop Warner football is on

personal responsibilities and the academic attitude that ensures proper lifelong priorities. Experience with Pop Warner football provides a solid foundation for youth to make the right choices as they grow up.

Pop Warner requires satisfactory scholastic progress in order to participate.

making sure the children have fun while ensuring their safety and promoting academics. But it isn't just the children who have fun. The parents and other adults involved in Pop Warner share in the enjoyment of the game, encouraging the players and taking pride in the accomplishments of their children.

Football, in particular, seems to magnify the learning experiences and emotional bonding that takes place in youth athletics. Football also seems to provide stronger, more lasting camaraderie than other sports. Whether the youngsters go on to play in the NFL, like Smith, Terrell Davis, Eddie George, and



The Flemington (New Jersey) Falcons, 1995 Junior Pee Wee National Champions.

Youth sports provide great tools in many areas of child development: teamwork, discipline, determination, and work-reward relationships. PWLS goes beyond the normal youth sports experience. Young players are not only taught that athletic participation is fun and important to good health, but also that good academic skills are more important than special athletic skills. The Pop Warner objective is to teach participants

John Elway, or their Pop Warner experience is their only direct participation in football, Pop Warner's objective is to make their involvement fun, safe, and educational. Ask anyone who played youth football, especially with Pop Warner's emphasis on fun and safety, if he enjoyed the experience. Universally, the response is a distant look of remembrance, a small smile, and a very affirmative "yes" in reply. ●

Jon Butler is the executive director of Pop Warner Little Scholars.

FIELD goals

Pop Warner's goals of fun, safety, and education are achieved in the following ways:

1 Age and weight-matched players The heart of Pop Warner's safety record is an age-weight schematic that ensures that opposing players will be of similar ages and weights.

2 Strict mandatory equipment Pop Warner players must wear the same equipment as a high school or college player, including a current NOCSAE-approved helmet.

3 Pop Warner Coaching Clinics A proprietary educational program for Pop Warner coaches and administrators to help ensure that their emphasis is on safety and fun.

4 No tryouts and no cutting Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

5 Mandatory play Every player plays in every game and check lists are kept to ensure that they do.

6 At younger levels, on-field coaching For younger participants, a coach is actually on the field at all times to explain plays and assignments and to offer reassurance.

7 No individual awards for on-field activities Considering the ages of the participants, they may receive team-wide recognition, but no All-Star, MVP, or special recognition trophies are awarded.

8 Mandatory academic standards Pop Warner is the only national youth organization that requires satisfactory scholastic progress in order to participate.

9 Academic All-American Program The only individual recognition for Pop Warner participants is for their classroom efforts. In April 1997, Pop Warner named 200 players to a First Team of Academic All-Americans (50 per grade in fifth through eighth grades) and over 1,900 players to a Second Team of Academic All-Americans.

10 Pop Warner Super Bowl Excellent fun for all! Held at Disney World, in Orlando, Florida, this year's event will showcase 36 teams in five different age-weight categories playing at the new Disney Wide World of Sports Complex, which opened in May 1997.

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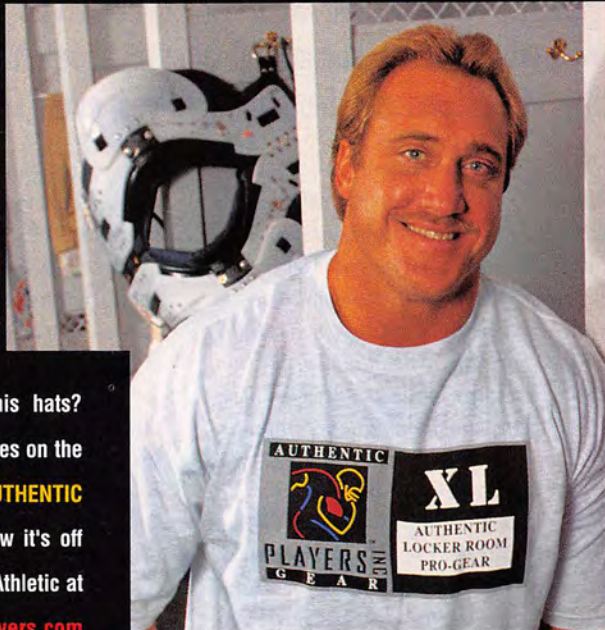


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PLAYERS IN

the REAL Jerry Maguire(s)

BY WILLIAM HENRY



Tom Condon (left) and Ken "Fuzzy" Kremer flash their "million dollar" smiles.

A candid conversation with **Tom Condon** and **Ken Kremer**, two of pro football's most successful agents, about life as an agent, the state of professional football, and, yes, even **THE MOVIE**.

No lights. No cameras overhead. No movie producers lurking in the shadows. After watching the movie *Jerry Maguire*, one finds it hard to believe this is an agent's office. And not just any agent, but two who represent more football players than anyone else in the business. For both, football is their passion, their life, and their livelihood. Between them, they've spent more than 35 years in professional football. Tom Condon was a 12-year starter at offensive guard with the Kansas City Chiefs and the New England Patriots. Late in his career, he did two things: went to law school at night and during the off-season and became the president of the NFL Players Association. After all, what would you expect from the son of a Harvard-trained lawyer? Ken Kremer, too, played with the Kansas City Chiefs, for six years as a defensive lineman. During his career, he has recruited and negotiated the contracts for more than 10 first-round NFL draft choices.

Without question, the movie *Jerry Maguire* increased people's curiosity about

the sports-agent business. Million-dollar deals, million-dollar clients, even million-dollar agents. But what's the agent business really like? To find out, we sent writer William Henry to International Management Group's Kansas City office to capture the real essence of the professional football agent business.

Street & Smith's: How long have you been in the agent business, and how did you actually get started?

Tom Condon: It's hard to believe, but I've now been in the agent business for more than 12 years. I suppose it was a natural transition, because by the time I'd finished playing professional football, I'd earned my law degree and many of my teammates had already started asking me to represent them. Additionally, I was finishing off my term as president of the NFL Players Association, so I had gained some valuable experience in collective bargaining issues. Eventually, while practicing law at my own law firm

in Kansas City, several veteran players approached me and asked me to represent them. That was in 1986. In 1987 I took the next step and went out and had my first recruiting class.

S&S: Who was your first client and do you remember the deal you negotiated for him?

Tom: I'll never forget it. I did Art Still's deal. He was with the Kansas City Chiefs at that time. I actually co-represented him with Tony Agnone, who worked in the dean's office at the University of Baltimore, where I got my law degree. In fact, Tony and I worked together for a little over a year. During that time, I went out and recruited Danny Noonan, who was the Big Eight Man of the Year and who ended up being my first first-round draft choice. Of course, I drew a real easy team to negotiate against [laughing]—the Dallas Cowboys, with Tex Schramm and Gil Brandt. We ended up holding out for a period of time. At that time, there wasn't any other alternative—you withheld services, and it became a matter of wills.

S&S: Outside of playing ability, what are some of the characteristics you guys consider when recruiting players?

Tom: Integrity. Honesty. Determination. Intelligence. Those are just some of the characteristics that you have to look at when you're recruiting a player. These days, what a player does off the field is almost as important as what he does on the field. A good example this year is Tom Knight, one of our clients, who was the ninth pick in the first round of this year's NFL draft. Here's a kid who went to the University of Iowa and earned his degree, so you know he went to class and paid attention. More importantly than that, he's just a first-class person. He also happens to be a great football player. Ultimately, when you combine great skills with those other attributes, you really have something.

Ken Kremer: Big rookie contracts are great. So are big free-agent deals. But often, negotiating a good deal for a player with a lot of character and heart can be just as gratifying.

S&S: If you weren't in the football business what do you think you'd be doing?

Tom: [laughs] Priest. No, just kidding.



I've been involved in football for so long, I'm not really sure. I suppose I could practice law full time if I had to.

Ken: It would have to be something related to the football business. Perhaps a college or pro coach.

S&S: Do you guys feel like you treat your star clients any differently from your middle-of-the-road clients?

Tom: No—Joe Montana or Joe Blow—everybody gets treated exactly the same. We feel it's extremely important to treat all of our clients the same. Although some agents have different fee structures for rookies and veterans, we charge the same across the board. We don't take anything out of the performance incentives or the honors portion of our contracts.

S&S: In the movie, *Jerry Maguire*, Tom Cruise called his only client, Rod Tidwell, nearly every day. Do you call your players that often?

Tom: Yes. Every player gets one or more calls from someone in this office at least once a week. Typically a player will call in and talk to all our staff people. We're an intimate group, with eight people in the football division, so the players get to know everybody in the office.

S&S: Much has been made of the current collective bargaining agreement. How do you think the CBA has affected the agent business in the last several years?

Tom: It has completely changed the face of the business. For starters, it finally allowed players to get paid what they were worth—rookies and veterans. Plus, it created free agency in the NFL for the

Eugene Parker as the top four agents in terms of clients, with us ranked as number one. More important than that is the fact that over the last two years, we negotiated more free-agent dollars than anyone else in the agent business.

S&S: What do you think was the most realistic part of *Jerry Maguire*?

Ken: I think the most realistic part was the emotion that Tom Cruise's client, Rod Tidwell [Cuba Gooding Jr.], displayed. We've had some players react similarly to good news, and even to bad news.

S&S: Do you guys have your own Rod Tidwell?

Tom: No, we really don't have anybody that approaches that level of hand-holding. I shouldn't say hand-holding. But no, we don't have anybody that requires that kind of immediate and intense and pervasive care. I think that's mostly because we've got a lot of sophisticated players, especially the guys that are really prepared for life after football. Those types of players usually have a good head on their shoulders and tend to be more independent, which means they don't require constant care.

S&S: Although it's now a cliché question, I've got to ask you anyway. Has a player ever said to you—"show me the money"?

Tom: No, but they have said a few other choice things.

S&S: Can you elaborate?

"These days, what a player does off the field is almost as important as what he does on the field."

first time, which ultimately leads to higher wages. The scary part is the money keeps getting bigger every year.

S&S: In the movie, Tom Cruise supposedly had 72 clients. How many clients do you guys have?

Tom: We don't keep a daily count, but it's very close to 90 players.

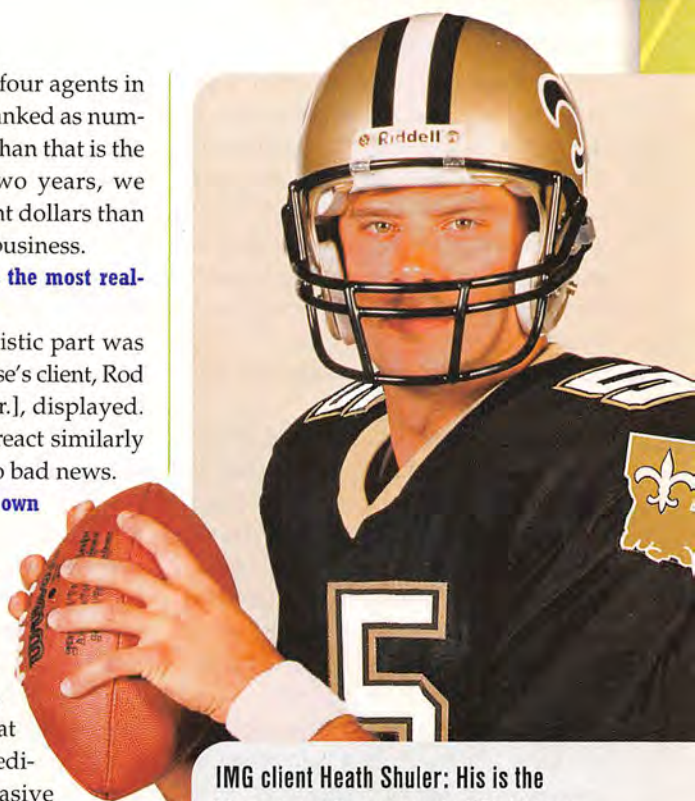
S&S: Does anyone have more football clients than you?

Tom: I think *Sports Illustrated* listed us, Leigh Steinberg, Marvin Demoff, and

Tom: I don't think you could print it in a wholesome magazine like *Street & Smith's*!

S&S: If you had to name one thing as your favorite part of the agent business, what would it be?

Ken: My favorite part is recruiting new people. I enjoy meeting people. Contracts are fun and challenging, but I think going out there and meeting new people and signing new clients is the most exciting part of the business.



IMG client Heath Shuler: His is the biggest rookie contract in NFL history.

Tom: On my side, I like negotiating the contracts. I like to try to figure out how to utilize the collective bargaining agreement to our clients' best interests.

S&S: How about your least favorite part of the business?

Tom: I think my least favorite is probably when it is time to go to the cattle call for the top 10 or so draft choices. Unfortunately, the undergraduate player student/athlete is typically not as well versed in the business aspects of the game as are the veteran players. And they've never been through the agent process before, so they don't know what to look for in an agent.

Ken: The thing I hate the most is having to tell a player when it's time to hang it up. Typically, players have a hard time accepting the fact that they can no longer make it in the NFL. Although some take it well, most find it very difficult to accept.

S&S: You've been involved with professional football for more than 20 years. What do you think is the biggest change that you have seen in that time period?

Tom: The size and speed of the players, and how much money they make. As an example, in 1974 I made \$18,000 as a ➤

► continued from page 33

rookie. Now, the minimum salary is 10 times that amount. As far as the size of the players is concerned, a 250-pound guy used to play offensive line; today that same size player is your full-back. Now we represent linemen like Zeuss Brown, who is 6-7 and 355 pounds, "Big House" Howard Ballard, 6-7, 340 pounds, and Bubba Parker, 6-6, 320 pounds.

S&S: What is the biggest contract that you have ever negotiated?

Tom: From a gross dollar amount, it was probably Heath Shuler's rookie deal. It was an eight-year contract with void and buy-back clauses that could reduce it from eight years to three or five years, which made him on a three- or five-year basis the highest-paid rookie in the history of the National Football League. Additionally, we've had 10 or so instances where we've negotiated a veteran's contract that has made him the highest-paid player at his position at that particular time.

S&S: What would you consider your greatest achievement in the agent business?

Tom: That's hard to say. I guess that within a relatively short period of time—12

years—we've been able to go from no clients at all to more clients than anyone else in the business. But at the same time, I'm also proud that the NFL officials union selected me to represent them, as well as my work for Jackson County and Arrowhead Stadium, to keep the Kansas City Royals and the Kansas City Chiefs in Kansas City.

S&S: In general, the movie *Jerry Maguire* gives a well-needed positive spin on the agent business. Why do you think that agents in general have such a negative reputation?

Ken: I think that the reason that agents have a bad rap is because they deserve it in most cases. There are stories of players being taken by agents who have elaborate marketing schemes and charge exorbitant fees. Some of that has been put to rest, now that the NFL Players Association certifies all agents. However, you've got to remember that there are over 800 registered football agents, and with that many, there are bound to be some bad apples.

S&S: Are there any agents who you feel do a good job?

Tom: Ralph Cindrich does a good job.

Frank Bauer is a good, honest guy. Tony Agnone does a good job. These are just a few guys, off the top of my head, that I think do a fine job.

S&S: Tom Cruise had a unique relationship with his client in *Jerry Maguire*. What sort of relationships do you have with players off the field or once their careers are finished?

Tom: That depends upon the player. We've got guys that went to really fine academic institutions with advanced degrees and who are in other businesses outside of football. Mark Edickes, who is now in medical school, is a good example. Danny Noonan is another good example. He is currently the assistant to the University of Nebraska's strength staff, and will be a head strength coach somewhere. Both are former clients. Both stay in contact with us a lot. We have a friendship relationship as well as a business relationship. Then we have other clients, like Joe Montana and Archie Manning, who moved into other parts of the IMG business. For instance, we have 10 ex-NFL players or coaches who work with our television division, TWI, which

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is the largest independent producer of sports programming in the world.

S&S: If there were one piece of advice that you were going to give to an aspiring agent, what would it be?

Tom: Play it straight. The worst thing someone can do is to get into this business and be less than 100 percent honest. Other than that, you can't be afraid to work past 5:00 p.m., because you've got to work nights, and you've got to call the players when they're available.

S&S: Let's talk about the future. How do you guys see the future of the agent business? Where do you see it going?

Tom: The agent business will continue to mature and become more sophisticated. I think the new TV contracts are going to increase by more than 50 percent. Al Davis says it's going to be a 100 percent increase over the previous TV contract. I haven't heard anybody estimate it under 50 percent. So from that standpoint, I think that there will be more money in the business and the salaries will continue to rise. I also think that the league has identified the fact that not


only are there great players at every position, but more importantly, there are positions that have more influence on the outcome of the game. And those are typically the positions that are going to come into play on third down. So on offense, it's the deep-threat wide receiver, the feature back, quarterback, and the left offensive tackle. On the defense, it's your weak-side linebacker, or it's your big-time open-side defensive end, or your cover corner. I think we are seeing the dollars migrate not only to the premier players at all of the positions, but more typically to the premier players who are in what the league considers to be the impact positions.

Ken: I think the players are going to get paid more money. I think that this collective bargaining agreement is a good one, and I think in the long run it has worked for both the owners and the players. Although the owners are spending more money than they ever have, they have cost controls in place. So if the players are going to get more money, then hopefully our business will grow incrementally as

the players make more money.

S&S: What are your future plans with IMG? Have you ever thought about doing what Tom Cruise did in *Jerry Maguire*—cutting loose all of your clients?

Tom: [laughs] If we ever thought about that, we'd be moving into much smaller houses. Actually, I think for the future we're looking at several different things. We are continuing to try to do a better job of utilizing the rest of our company. With IMG as our parent company, we believe we've got the most experienced and comprehensive sports agency in the business.

Ken: I think that Mark McCormick [chairman and CEO of IMG] calls it synergy. To have one part of the company working hand in hand with another part of the company. I love IMG because it gives us the ability to cross-reference many different sports. So if one of our football clients wanted to play golf with Tiger Woods or tennis with Pete Sampras or basketball with Chris Webber, we could make it happen. And, of course, the best part is that we have the modeling division with Tyra Banks. 



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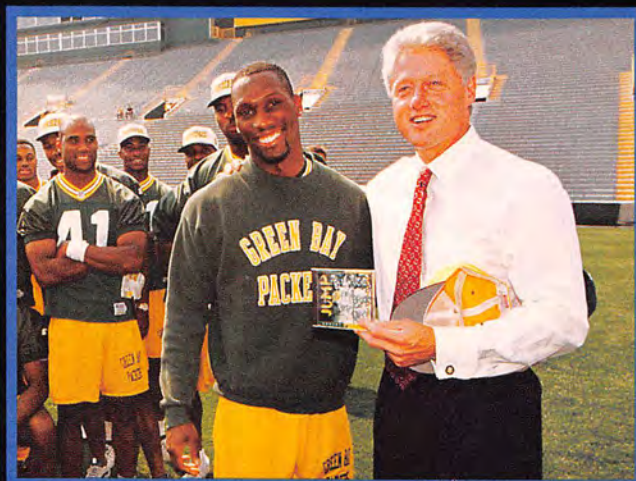
Off-field



Supermodels Bridget Hall, left, and Carol Alt are shown modeling the new PLAYERS INC clothing line. Do you think they get discounts on PLAYERS INC merchandise, or what?



Former vice-presidential candidate Jack Kemp, left, and NFLPA executive director Gene Upshaw, right, making new friends at Playoff's Unsung Heroes Awards banquet in Washington, D.C.



OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO

Green Bay's Robert Brooks adds President Clinton as a loyal listener to his hit CD, *Jump Into the Stands*. (We think the President is negotiating to play saxophone on the sequel.)



Herschel Walker and fans at the NFL Players Super Bowl brunch to benefit the Special Olympics.



Stan Humphries, right, steps on stage to accept the first annual NFL Players Humanitarian Award, in New Orleans.

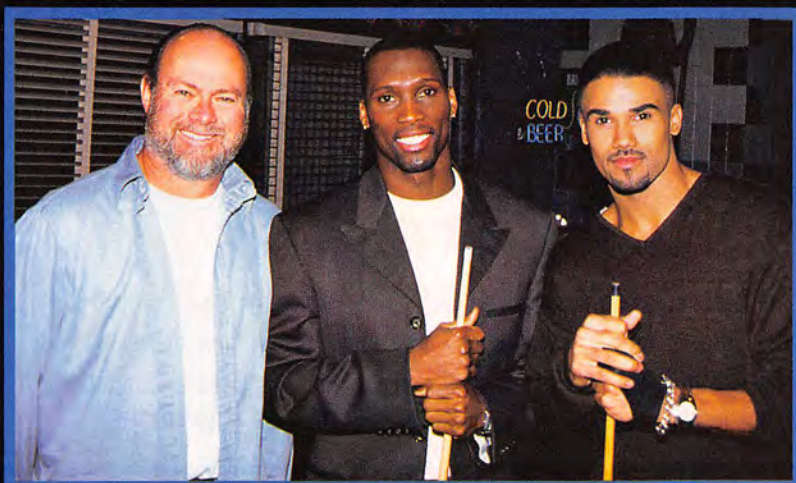


From left: Cris Carter, Curtis Martin, Kyle Brady, Brent Jones, Bryce Paup, Daryl Johnston, Jerry Ball, and Eric Metcalf all ask "Where's Marsha, Marsha, Marsha?" at the 1-800-COLLECT *Brady Bunch* filming.

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happenings

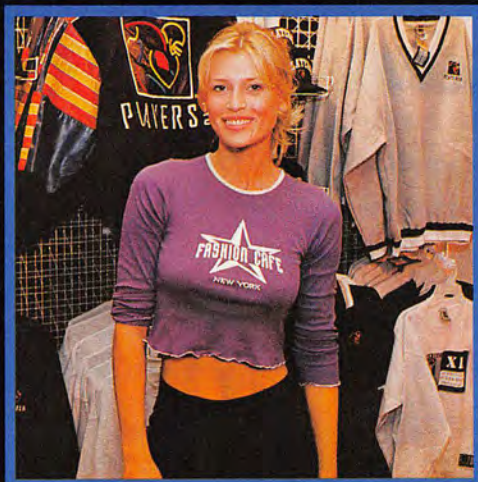
PLAYERS 



Robert Brooks, center, after his cameo appearance on *The Young and the Restless*, with Ed Scott, left, one of the show's producers, and Shemar Moore, one of the show's stars.



Joe Montana, shown here accepting the NFL Players Lifetime Achievement Award at the Unsung Heroes banquet, in Washington, D.C.



Supermodel Daniella Pestova at the NFL Players Party, wondering where her PLAYERS INC gear is.



Rookies Derrick Mayes, left, and Eddie Kennison, right, at the NFL Players Rookie Premiere, preparing for their next careers as hosts of *Dance Fever*. Look out Denny Terrio!



The NFL Players Party cheerleaders welcome fans to the NFL Players Party, in New Orleans.



Rocket Ismail gets behind the scene at Giants Stadium during MCI's 1-800-COLLECT commercials.

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The goal of Street & Smith's is to bring you the best magazine on pro football. We are redesigning our yearbooks to make them more exciting and informative for you. You can help us by answering the questions below. You will be entered into our drawing, and you could win an NFL game football autographed by Troy Aikman, Brett Favre, Joe Namath, Roger Staubach, or Lawrence Taylor! We must receive your answers by November 30, 1997.

- 1** Do you like the redesign of our Football issue? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, what did you like most about it? _____
Why? _____
If no, what did you like least about it? _____
Why? _____
What would you like to see more of? _____
What would you like to see less of? _____
- 2** Do you actively participate in a sport (at any level) or a regular fitness program? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, which sport or program? _____
How many hours per week? _____
How much do you spend on equipment per year? \$ _____
On athletic or team clothing per year? \$ _____
- 3** How many pairs of athletic shoes do you purchase each year? _____
Brand names? _____
- 4** How much time do you spend watching sports on TV on average each week? _____ hours
- 5** Do you own a satellite dish? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- 6** Do you drink sports drinks? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Brand(s) _____
- 7** Do you drink any of the following:
☐ Milk ☐ Fruit Juices ☐ Fruit Drinks ☐ Soda ☐ Bottled Water
- 8** How often do you go out socially per week (average) _____
- 9** Do you drink any of the following?
☐ Beer Brand _____
☐ Wine Brand _____
☐ Spirits Brand _____
- 10** Do you look for *Street & Smith's Pro Football* specifically? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- 11** How long have you been buying *Street & Smith's Pro Football*?
☐ 1-5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 10-15 years ☐ 15-25 years ☐ 25+ years
 - 12** Do you read any other sports magazines? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Which ones? _____
 - 13** Besides yourself, how many people will read your issue of *Street & Smith's Pro Football*? _____
 - 14** Will you save this issue? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - 15** Do you own a personal computer? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - 16** Do you use it for sports information? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - 17** Do you play video games? ☐ Yes ☐ No
What are your favorite games? _____
 - 18** How much do you spend on grooming products per year? \$ _____
 - 19** Which grooming product(s)/brand(s) do you use regularly?
☐ Shaver _____ ☐ Fragrance _____
☐ Shave Cream _____ ☐ Shampoo _____
☐ After-shave _____ ☐ Hair Conditioner _____
 - 20** Do you own a car? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - 21** What is the make? _____ Year? _____
 - 22** How often do you purchase a new car? Every _____ years
 - 23** If you purchased a new car tomorrow for under \$30,000, what make would it be? _____
 - 24** Do you drive to work? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, how many miles per week? _____
 - 25** Do you service your own car? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes: ☐ Oil ☐ Electrical ☐ Antifreeze ☐ Tires
☐ Muffler ☐ Tuneup ☐ Other _____
 - 26** Are you ☐ Male ☐ Female
- Thank you. Please remove this page and send to:
Street & Smith's Football, 342 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017
- Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone () _____ E-mail _____

DREAM TEAM

PRESENTING THE BEST UNITS IN
THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE,
POSITION BY POSITION.

BY RICK GOSSELIN

DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Emmitt Smith wanted to compete in the 1996 Olympics. In true Madison Avenue-fashion, the four-time NFL rushing champion gathered a group of his peers and journeyed to Atlanta to pursue a gold medal in football. At least that's what his shoe company would have you believe. Smith was the focus of a popular Olympic-themed advertising campaign last summer that may have sold more shoes...but didn't capture any gold.

The world has witnessed America's best basketball players in an Olympic forum. A squad of NBA superstars has been assembled twice. And in 1998, the world will see America's greatest hockey players compete for the gold, a dream team on ice.

Pro football, however, while popular worldwide, remains a game played almost exclusively within U.S.

borders. There's almost no international competition—so the world will never see the nation's greatest grid-ders ever assembled on the same sideline. At least not in Smith's lifetime. But a dream team of NFL players does exist, if only in league commissioner Paul Tagliabue's dreams.

Because football is a team sport, you'd want to keep position groupings together to maximize the teamwork. So instead of the NFL's four top defensive backs, you'd keep intact, for example, the Dallas secondary. The players in that unit know each other and play well together. You'd invite the Pittsburgh offensive line, the Green Bay receivers, and so on.

Here is the Street & Smith's 1997 NFL Dream Team that the world will never see, the best units in the NFL, position by position.

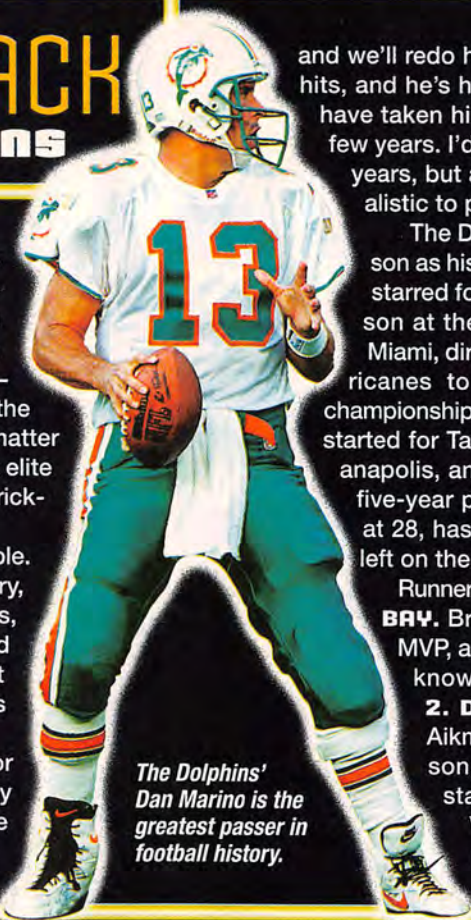
QUARTERBACK

MIAMI DOLPHINS

There are six franchise quarterbacks in pro football: Troy Aikman, Brett Favre, and Steve Young in the NFC, and Drew Bledsoe, John Elway, and Dan Marino in the AFC—with Mark Brunell closing in. Finding the best quarterbacking in the NFL is a matter of settling on the best backup of that elite group. That would be veteran Craig Erickson, with Miami.

Marino's credentials are impeccable. The greatest passer in football history, he holds NFL records for completions, yards, and touchdowns. He showed there's still plenty of zip in his arm last season with three-touchdown games against the Jets and the Colts.

"We've got him under contract for two more years," Miami coach Jimmy Johnson said. "Hopefully, he'll still be productive at the end of the contract



The Dolphins' Dan Marino is the greatest passer in football history.

and we'll redo him. But Dan has taken a lot of hits, and he's had some nagging injuries that have taken him out of some games the last few years. I'd love to see him play five more years, but at his age, that would be unrealistic to predict at this time."

The Dolphins have earmarked Erickson as his successor. A Florida native, he starred for Dolphins coach Jimmy Johnson at the University of Miami, directing the Hurricanes to two national championships. Erickson has started for Tampa Bay, Indianapolis, and Miami in his five-year pro career and, at 28, has plenty of time left on the meter.

Runners-up: **1. GREEN BAY.** Brett Favre's the MVP, and Steve Bono knows the system.

2. DALLAS. Troy Aikman, Wade Wilson, and Jason Garrett have all started and won. **3. CAROLINA.** Veteran Steve Beuerlein backs up Kerry Collins.



Miami's Craig Erickson is a proven winner.

Ricky Watters has proven his point. He wanted to expand his role in the San Francisco offense and become a feature player on a level with Steve Young and Jerry Rice. The 49ers weren't prepared to make that commitment, so Watters left for Philadelphia in free agency in 1995. He has rushed for 2,684 yards and gone to two Pro Bowls since then. Only past NFL rushing champions Barry Sanders and Emmitt Smith have gained more yards in that stretch. Watters also has scored 25 of his team's 65 offensive touchdowns and carried the Eagles to back-to-back playoff berths.

"I've seen Ricky Watters help take the 49ers to the championship," Eagles coach Ray Rhodes said. "I've seen his production. I know he can take us to the next level."

The Eagles don't have a designated third-down back. Watters has filled that role himself, with 113 catches over his two seasons in Philadelphia. That's more than Sanders or Smith.

With the ability to explode for a 100-yard afternoon, Charlie Garner gives the Eagles a change-

of-pace back. He has rushed for 934 yards and seven touchdowns on a fill-in basis the last two years.

Watters is a big back with power. He slashes for yards. Garner is a small back with quickness and speed. He provides an outside threat. Defenses that pack the box to stop Watters must unpack for Garner. Neither Sanders nor Smith has a Garner.

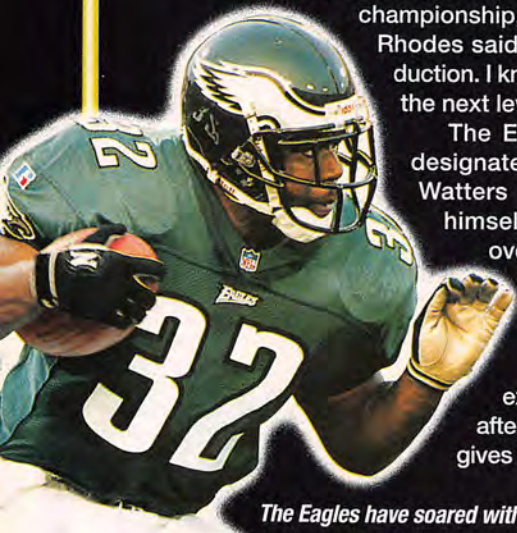
Kevin Turner is the prototype West Coast-offense fullback—a pass catcher first, a blocker second, and a runner third. He had as many catches as Dallas's Daryl Johnston last season.

There are better runners in the NFL than Watters, better blockers and receivers than Turner, and maybe even a better backup than Garner—but not all in the same backfield.

Runners-up: **1. DALLAS.** Smith at halfback, Johnston at fullback. **2. NEW ENGLAND.** Curtis Martin runs, Sam Gash blocks, and Keith Byars and Dave Meggett catch. **3. PITTSBURGH.** Great 1-2 tailback punch in Jerome Bettis and Erric Pegram.



Charlie Garner gives Philly an outside threat.



The Eagles have soared with tailback Ricky Watters.

RUNNING BACKS

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

RECEIVERS GREEN BAY PACKERS

Sherman Lewis knows the look of a great receiving corps. His Super Bowl rings make him an expert. Lewis was the receivers coach at San Francisco in 1983-91, handling Jerry Rice, John Taylor, and Brent Jones in their primes. He coached the best then and, as offensive coordinator of the Packers, coaches the best now.

So deep are the Packers on the flank that they won the Super Bowl last January without their best wide receiver, Robert Brooks. So talented are the Packers that they cut Andre Rison, a four-time Pro Bowler, and won't miss a step with the retirement of all-pro tight end Keith Jackson.

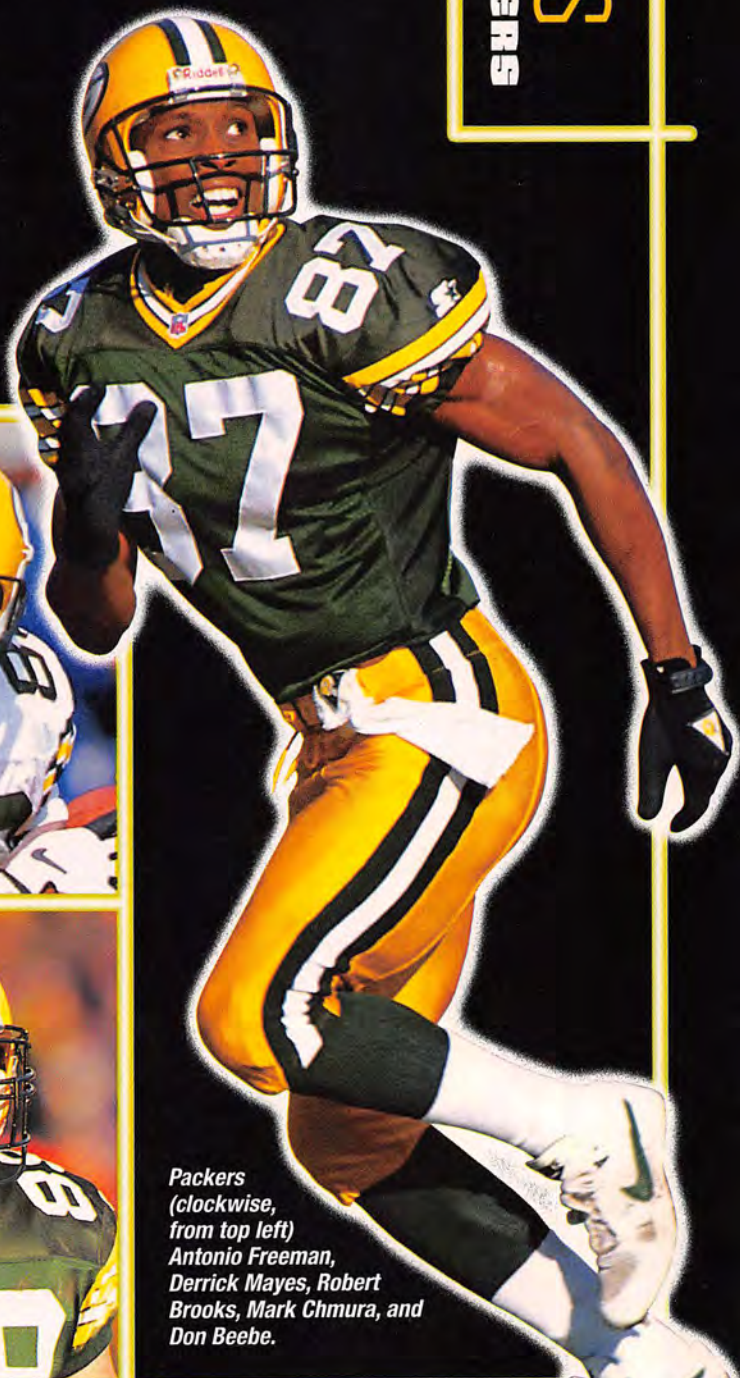
Brooks returns from a midseason knee injury to reclaim his role as Brett Favre's go-to guy. Also back is Antonio Freeman, who developed into the go-to guy in 1996 during Brooks's absence. Freeman caught 56 passes and scored nine touchdowns despite missing a month with injuries. Both are big, young, fast, and remind Lewis of his great 49er pair.

"These guys aren't quite as good after the catch. Nobody made things happen after the catch like Rice and Taylor," Lewis said. "These guys also aren't quite as physical. But they compare with their competitiveness and ability to get open. Give them the ball and they can make things happen."

Don Beebe, who had a 220-yard game for the Packers last season, returns as the third wideout, and

Derrick Mayes is penciled in at four. He's Notre Dame's all-time leading receiver, but was a mere spectator as a rookie in 1996. Mark Chmura will shoulder more of the load at tight end with Jackson gone. He's a past Pro Bowler himself, having caught 54 passes in 1995. And he's only 28.

Runners-up: **1. NEW ENGLAND.** Terry Glenn and Ben Coates strike fear deep. **2. JACKSONVILLE.** No tandem was better than Keenan McCardell and Jimmy Smith a year ago. **3. BALTIMORE.** If Eric Green returns to Pro Bowl form, the Ravens have it all.



Packers
(clockwise,
from top left)
Antonio Freeman,
Derrick Mayes, Robert
Brooks, Mark Chmura, and
Don Beebe.



LINEBACKERS

CAROLINA PANTHERS

Free agency hasn't won any NFL championships yet. But it has allowed the Carolina Panthers to build the best linebacking corps of the decade. And the best just got even better with the signing of free agent Micheal Barrow. He joins three incumbent Pro Bowl linebackers in Carolina's 3-4 scheme: Kevin Greene, Lamar Lathon, and Sam Mills. Money was a factor in Barrow's decision to sign with the Panthers (a reported \$18.75 million over five years), but so was the uniqueness of the opportunity.

"This was a chance to be part of history," Barrow said. "When you think of great linebacking groups, you think of the Chicago Bears with Mike Single-

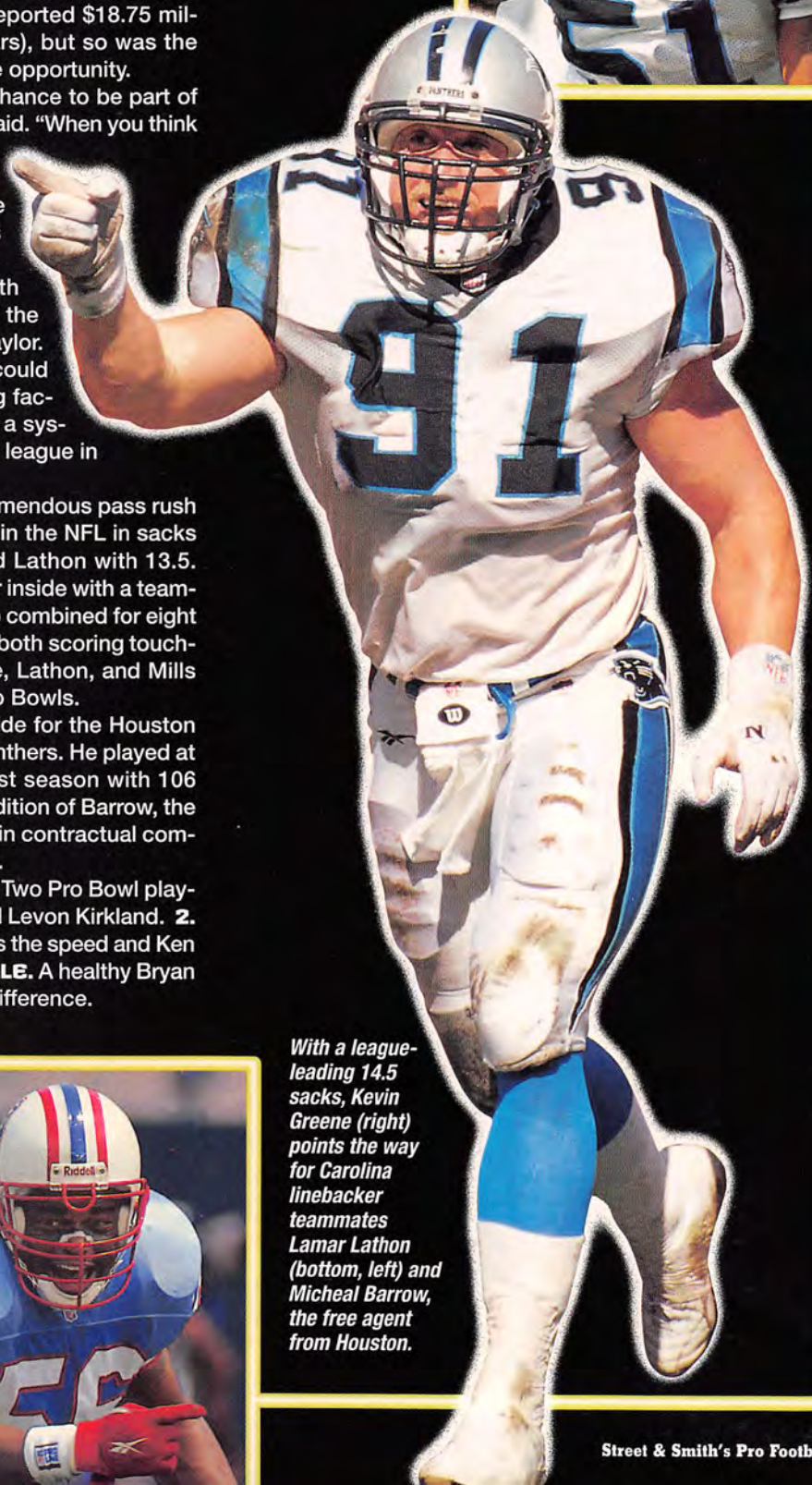
tary, the Pittsburgh Steelers with Jack Lambert and Jack Ham, and the New York Giants with Lawrence Taylor. Just to be part of something that could be really special here played a big factor in my decision, to be a part of a system that has been dominating the league in recent years."

Greene and Lathon bring a tremendous pass rush off the corners. They finished 1-2 in the NFL in sacks a year ago, Greene with 14.5 and Lathon with 13.5. Mills held the run defense together inside with a team-leading 138 tackles. The three also combined for eight takeaways, with Mills and Greene both scoring touchdowns on fumble returns. Greene, Lathon, and Mills have now been to a total of 10 Pro Bowls.

Although Barrow played outside for the Houston Oilers, he'll move inside for the Panthers. He played at a Pro Bowl level for the Oilers last season with 106 tackles and six sacks. With the addition of Barrow, the Panthers now have \$37.05 million in contractual commitments to their four linebackers.

Runners-up: **1. PITTSBURGH.** Two Pro Bowl players in heavy hitters Greg Lloyd and Levon Kirkland. **2. SAN FRANCISCO.** Lee Woodall has the speed and Ken Norton the power. **3. JACKSONVILLE.** A healthy Bryan Schwartz in the middle makes a difference.

The Panthers' Sam Mills had over 100 tackles for the seventh time in his pro career.



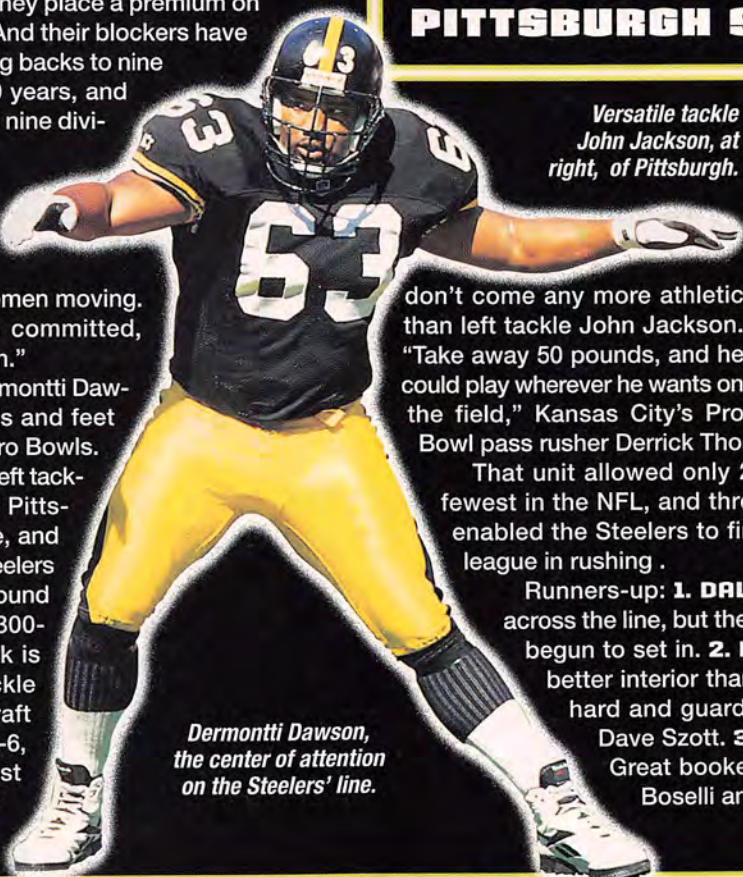
With a league-leading 14.5 sacks, Kevin Greene (right) points the way for Carolina linebacker teammates Lamar Lathon (bottom, left) and Micheal Barrow, the free agent from Houston.



The formula has remained the same for the Steelers since they began winning Super Bowls in the 1970s: Run the ball. So they place a premium on players who can block. And their blockers have sent four different running backs to nine Pro Bowls in the last 20 years, and Pittsburgh has captured nine division titles.

"We want size and athletic ability," Steelers coach Bill Cowher said. "We do a lot of things that keep our linemen moving. We want kids that are committed, hard-working, and tough."

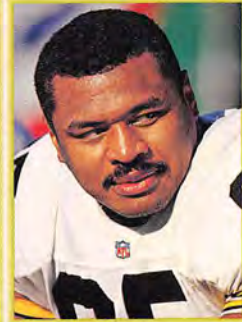
Start with center Dermontti Dawson, whose quick hands and feet have taken him to five Pro Bowls. Will Wolford, a Pro Bowl left tackle at Buffalo, signed by Pittsburgh and moved inside, and Brenden Stai give the Steelers a pair of powerful 300-pound guards. The versatile 300-pound Justin Strzelczyk is holding down right tackle until '96 first-round draft pick Jamain Stephens (6-6, 330), the team's largest player, is ready. And they



Dermontti Dawson, the center of attention on the Steelers' line.

OFFENSIVE LINE PITTSBURGH STEELERS

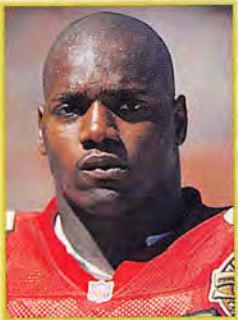
Versatile tackle John Jackson, at right, of Pittsburgh.



don't come any more athletic than left tackle John Jackson. "Take away 50 pounds, and he could play wherever he wants on the field," Kansas City's Pro Bowl pass rusher Derrick Thomas said.

That unit allowed only 21 sacks, second-fewest in the NFL, and threw the blocks that enabled the Steelers to finish second in the league in rushing.

Runners-up: **1. DALLAS.** Pro Bowlers across the line, but the aging process has begun to set in. **2. KANSAS CITY.** No better interior than center Tim Grunhard and guards Will Shields and Dave Szott. **3. JACKSONVILLE.** Great bookend tackles in Tony Boselli and Leon Searcy.



Tackle Bryant Young gets a lot of sack time in San Francisco.

The success of the 49ers in the 1980s triggered a philosophical shift by NFL offenses to quick-pass schemes in the 1990s. The three- and five-step drops by quarterbacks have substantially neutralized the great outside pass rushers, forcing defenses to look inside for their pressure. So the hunt began for 300-pound tackles with the power to stuff the run and the speed to rush the passer.

The 49ers drafted Dana Stubblefield in 1993 and Bryant Young in '94, and have finished in the top

five in the NFL in run defense in each of the last three seasons. Stubblefield excels against the run, Young against the pass. They have combined for 37.5 sacks.

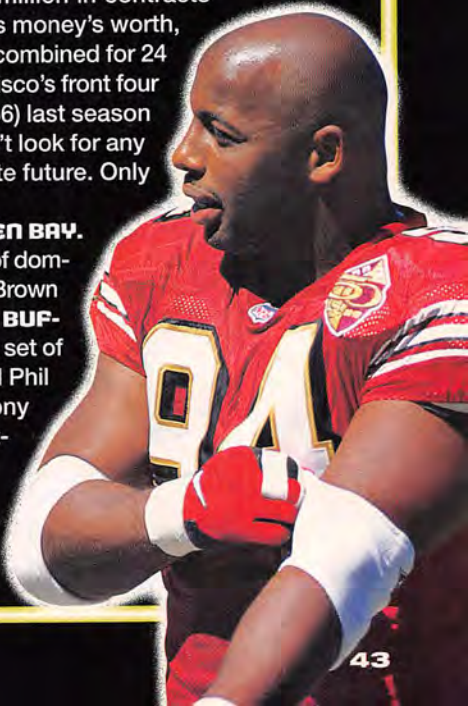
"Those tackles are outstanding," said Dallas quarterback Troy Aikman, whose own pocket has been

squeezed by Stubblefield and Young. "Put two guys of that caliber on one defensive front, and they cause some problems. We have a big, physical offensive line, but they know they're going to have their hands full every time we play those guys," said Aikman.

To reduce the double-teams on their prize tackles, the 49ers signed free-agent ends Roy Barker and Chris Doleman to nearly \$20 million in contracts in 1996. The team got its money's worth, as Barker and Doleman combined for 24 sacks. In fact, San Francisco's front four produced more sacks (36) last season than 16 NFL teams. Don't look for any drop-off in the immediate future. Only Doleman is over 30.

Runners-up: **1. GREEN BAY.** Reggie White and a pair of dominating tackles in Gilbert Brown and Santana Dotson. **2. BUFFALO.** The league's best set of ends in Bruce Smith and Phil Hansen. **3. DALLAS.** Tony Tolbert is vastly underrated at strongside end.

The 49ers struck gold with Dana Stubblefield.



DEFENSIVE LINE SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

DEFENSIVE BACKS

DALLAS COWBOYS

Jimmy Johnson believes that you win in the NFL by pressuring the quarterback. He learned early on in his coaching career that the better the coverage players you have, the more pass rushers you can deploy.

So in 1992 Johnson drafted Texas A&M cornerback Kevin Smith in the first round and Arizona State safety Darren Woodson in the second. Smith started as a rookie and Woodson became a stand-out in the nickel pass coverages. The Cowboys vaulted from 23rd to fifth in the NFL in pass defense and increased their sacks by 21 on the way to their first Super Bowl of the decade. Woodson, the best strong safety in the NFL, became a starter in '93 and the Cowboys won their second straight Super Bowl.

Since Johnson left in 1994, the Cowboys have added

Deion Sanders, the best coverage corner in the game. Coach Barry Switzer could play free safety with this group and the Cowboys would still have the best secondary in the NFL.

"They are so much better than anyone else," Johnson said. "Deion, Darren, and Kevin can take out the best receivers and the other eight defenders can play the run. Those three allow them to do anything they want on defense."

When Dallas was riddled up front by suspensions and injuries in '96, the coverage unit held the defense together. Smith and Woodson had five interceptions each, and the Cowboys finished second in pass defense and third in overall defense in the league on the way to a fifth consecutive NFC East title.

Runners-up: **1. GREEN BAY.** Best safeties in LeRoy Butler and Eugene Robinson. **2. BUFFALO.** Two first-round draft picks in the secondary. **3. PHILADELPHIA.** Bobby Taylor and Troy Vincent are superb on the corners.

Deion Sanders puts the D in Dallas.



In this corner, Kevin Smith of the Cowboys.



Most NFL teams wouldn't draft a kicker if you asked them to stock a soccer team. There's a belief that there are more kickers on the streets than stop signs. You can always find a kicker. You don't have to draft one, especially with a high pick.

Then there's Bill Tobin. When he worked for Green Bay, the Packers drafted placekicker Chester Marcol in the second round in 1972. Marcol led the NFL in scoring in his rookie year and went to two Pro Bowls in his nine seasons. As director of personnel at Chicago, Tobin drafted kicker Kevin Butler in the fourth round in 1985. Butler led the NFL in scoring in his rookie year and went on to become the team's all-time leading scorer. Tobin also drafted punter Chris Gardocki in the third round in 1991. Special teams have always been special to him.

Cary Blanchard makes his point for Indianapolis.

"The most important aspect in winning—and winning consistently—is defense," Tobin said. "Next is the running game, then special teams. The passing game and all that other stuff come later, but you'd better be sound and efficient in the kicking game."

So it's no surprise that the Colts have staged a dramatic turnaround in the kicking game

SPECIAL TEAMS

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

since Tobin's arrival. They ranked 24th in the NFL in special teams when he was hired in 1994. They were fifth in '96. Tobin signed Gardocki and kicker Cary Blanchard in free agency. Both went to the Pro Bowl last season. He signed Aaron Bailey as a rookie free agent in 1994, and Bailey finished in the top five in the AFC in kick-off returns a year ago. Tobin also drafted deep snapper Bradford Banta and kick-cover man Ray McElroy.

Runners-up: **1. CAROLINA.** Best collection of return men in Michael Bates, Raghib Ismail, and Winslow Oliver. **2. BUFFALO.** Steve Christie and Chris Mohr win battle vs. the elements. **3. TAMPA BAY.** Solid kicker and fast, young coverage units.

Chris Gardocki of the Colts.



ALL-TIME DREAM TEAM

FROM GEORGE ATKINSON TO STEVE YOUNG,
PLAYERS FROM PRO FOOTBALL'S GREATEST UNITS EVER.

QUARTERBACK 1989 SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Joe Montana, the game's biggest winner, was at his best in 1989 when he completed 70.2 percent of his passes for 3,521 yards, 26 TDs, and only eight interceptions. His 112.4 rating was a personal high.

And look who practiced behind him that season—Steve Young and Steve Bono. Young started three games because of Montana's injuries, and won them all, completing 69.6 percent of his passes for 1,001 yards and eight touchdowns. That team went 14-2 and won San Francisco's fourth Super Bowl of the decade.

RUNNING BACKS 1972 MIAMI DOLPHINS

The only unbeaten team in NFL history stayed perfect in 1972 by staying on the ground. With Hall of Fame quarterback Bob Griese injured and out most of the year, the Dolphins ran the ball twice as much as they threw it.

There were only 10 1,000-yard rushers in the league that season, and Miami had two of them: fullback Larry Csonka (1,117) and halfback Mercury Morris (1,000). Jim Kiick ran for 521. Morris averaged 5.3 yards per carry and Csonka 5.2. Morris rushed for 12 touchdowns, Csonka for six, and Kiick for five.

RECEIVERS 1980 SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Air Coryell at its finest. With Dan Fouts at quarterback, tight end Kellen Winslow led the league with 89 catches for 1,290 yards and nine touchdowns. John Jefferson finished third with 82 catches for a league-leading 1,340 yards and 13 TDs, and fellow wideout Charlie Joiner was fifth with 71 catches for 1,132 yards and four scores.

LINEBACKERS 1985 CHICAGO BEARS

The foundation of Buddy Ryan's 46 defense was its linebackers: Mike Singletary in the middle and Wilber Marshall and Otis Wilson outside. The Bears posted two shutouts that season and two more in the playoffs. They led the NFL in total defense, run defense, and scoring defense. Singletary, Marshall, and Wilson combined for 260 tackles, 20.5 sacks, nine interceptions, and six fumble recoveries on a team that went 15-1 and defeated the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XX.

OFFENSIVE LINE 1962 GREEN BAY PACKERS

Vince Lombardi's greatest team controlled the games up front. Left tackle Bob Skoronski was not voted all-pro, but everyone to his right was: left guard Fuzzy Thurston, center Jim Ringo, right guard Jerry Kramer, right tackle Forrest Gregg, and tight end Ron Kramer. Those Packers finished 13-1 and won the second of five Lombardi-era championships.

DEFENSIVE LINE 1976 PITTSBURGH STEELERS

The 1976 team was not one of Pittsburgh's four Super Bowl champions, but this was the Steel Curtain at its finest. With QB Terry Bradshaw in and out of the lineup with injuries, the team turned to its defense.

After a 1-4 start, the Steelers finished with nine consecutive wins, including five shutouts, to win the AFC Central. The front four of Joe Greene, L.C. Greenwood, Ernie Holmes, and Dwight White held opponents to 3.2 yards per rush and harassed quarterbacks into completing just 42.4 percent of their passes.

DEFENSIVE BACKS 1969 OAKLAND RAIDERS

The Raiders have fielded some of the finest cover men ever, but the 1969 unit of George Atkinson, Willie Brown, Dave Grayson, and Nemiah Wilson is the best secondary of all time.

Opposing quarterbacks completed just 164 passes against Oakland that year for a mere 38.8 percent. That remains the only defense since 1960 to hold opponents under 40 percent passing. The unit combined for 17 interceptions on a 12-1-1 team. All four players were blazers, but what set them apart was the physical nature of their game.

SPECIAL TEAMS

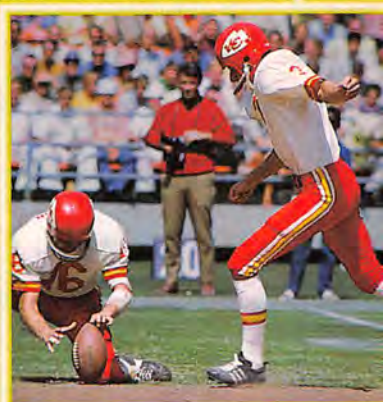
1968 KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Jan Stenerud, the only true kicking specialist in the Hall of Fame, finished second in the AFL in scoring. Punter Jerrel Wilson led the AFL, as did punt returner Noland Smith. Ceasar Belser became one of pro football's first special-teams aces with his kamikaze-like kick coverage.

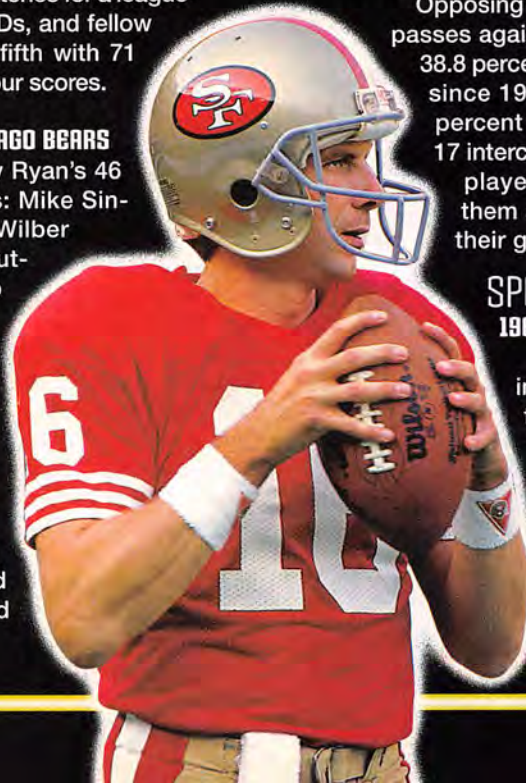
Joe Montana



Joe Greene



Jan Stenerud





▲ The Rams will charge behind No. 1 pick Orlando Pace.



► Class of '97: (clockwise from top left): James Farrior, Michael Booker, Darrell Russell, Orlando Pace, (Paul Tagliabue), Derek Smith, Bryant Westbrook, Shawn Springs, and Dwayne Rudd.



New Kids On



◀ We have a bone to pick with the Oakland Raiders, who selected Darrell Russell with their first choice in the draft.



► These fans, who attended the NFL draft, think that new Jets coach Bill Parcells has the team ready for takeoff.



by ANTHONY L. GARGANO, New York Post

The Buccaneers, Seahawks, Jets, Rams, and Ravens, who lost a total of 56 games last season, were all big winners in this year's NFL draft.

The Rams, after a trade with the Jets, got the top pick in offensive tackle Orlando Pace. The Jets, already riding a high with new coach Bill Parcells, turned six picks into 11 players who will help fill many holes. The Seahawks got two of the top six picks: cornerback Shawn Springs and tackle Walter Jones. The Bucs got a breakaway runner in Warrick Dunn and a big-play receiver in Reidel Anthony. The Ravens vastly improved their sickly defense with the best pass rusher in No. 4 pick Peter Boulware, linebacker Jamie Sharper, and safety Kim Herring.

"With what those teams did, they're not going to be losers much longer," said one NFL scout.

The Raiders traded up to No. 2 in hopes of landing Pace to protect quarterback Jeff George's blind side, but left with defensive lineman Darrell Russell. Of course, they said Russell was the guy they wanted all along.

The Rams teased them, waiting 10 minutes before officially



▲ Tight end Tony Gonzalez (at right, above) of the Chiefs.



▲ Michael Booker (above, at left) with Bryant Westbrook, his high school teammate.

n The Block

selecting Pace. "I thought, maybe they're regretting it. I got a little nervous," Pace said.

No regrets here. New coach Dick Vermeil loves Pace, who did not allow a sack in the last two seasons. The Rams allowed a league-high 57 sacks in '96. This year, however, defensive backs took center stage, with 50 taken in all, including first-rounders Springs, Bryant Westbrook (Lions), Tom Knight (Cardinals), Michael Booker (Falcons), Chad Scott (Steelers), and Chris Canty (Patriots).

Nine of the first 18 picks came from the state of Florida, and the first four picks were underclassmen. But as usual, the Heisman Trophy winner wasn't taken until the second day of the draft.

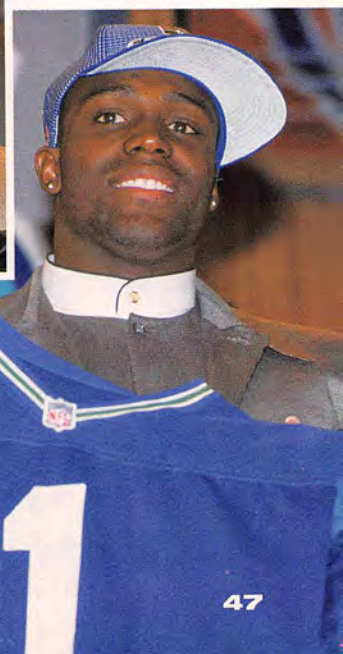
"A lot of the scouts are just into raw, physical ability, and I think some of the coaches look more at some of the intangible things rather than just the ability to play football," said Florida's Danny Wuerffel, who finally was taken by the Saints with the third pick of the fourth round.

Let's take a look at all of the winners and losers in the draft. Sorry, all grades are final.



▲ Paul Tagliabue (at left, above) with Oakland's Darrell Russell.

► Shawn Springs (at right) was the first defensive back taken, at No. 3, by the Seattle Seahawks.



ARIZONA CARDINALS

C- The Cards needed a corner to play opposite Aeneas Williams, but taking Iowa's Tom Knight with the ninth pick seems like a reach. It's as if they got nervous as all of the big-time defensive backs disappeared. Knight can run and hit and return punts. But why not a game-breaker for the often-grounded Cardinals? Someone like Rae Carruth. It was great to get a local hero like Arizona State's Jake Plummer, but in the second round? Then again, all the Cards might need to draw some fans is the exciting Plummer, who knows how to orchestrate comebacks at Sun Devil Stadium. Ohio State CB Ty Howard and Nebraska G Chris Dishman were solid picks.

ATLANTA FALCONS

C+ The 3-13 Falcons had just six interceptions in '96, and were ravaged by the pass. Needing help in the secondary, they came away with one of the best cornerbacks in Michael Booker (Nebraska), the 11th pick in the draft. Booker is big and fast and can cover the bigger wideouts. With two picks in the second round, the Falcons added Indiana DE Nathan Davis and Texas Tech RB Byron Hanspard, who gained 2,084 yards last year. We're O.K. with that thinking but not with third-rounder O.J. Santiago (Kent), a hulking tight end with questionable receiving skills.

BALTIMORE RAVENS

A The Ravens kept the No. 4 pick, taking Florida State pass-rushing specialist Peter Boulware. For a team that ranked last in the NFL in total defense



Peter Boulware

and had just 30 sacks, Boulware, who will be converted to OLB, is a godsend. Ditto for OLB and second-round steal Jamie Sharper (Virginia). They will start immediately, teaming with MLB Ray Lewis in the 4-3 defense. The rest of the Ravens' draft was solid, especially Penn State S Kim Herring as their second second-rounder and RB Jay Graham of Tennessee (third round). And if Florida C Jeff Mitchell (fifth round) stays healthy, he could replace the departed Steve Everitt.

BUFFALO BILLS

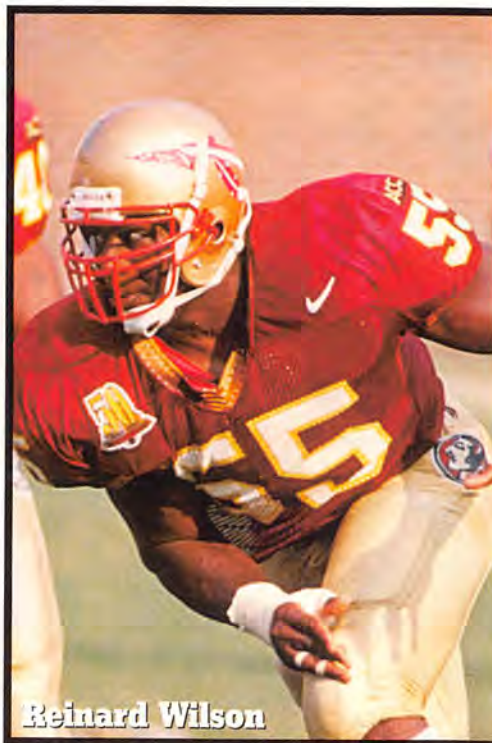
C RB Antowain Smith, the 23rd pick, and DE Marcellus Wiley, the second-round pick, are the successors to Thurman Thomas and Bruce Smith. Antowain Smith, who gained 1,239 yards (6.1 per carry) at Houston last season, took a three-year hiatus from football to work after his grandmother had a stroke. After she passed away in 1993, he resumed his career at East Mississippi Junior College. He's 25 now, but could be a real good one. Wiley, who had 17 tackles for losses at Columbia in '96, also has big-time potential. The only other player of note is OT Jamie Nails, who needs to lose weight.

CAROLINA PANTHERS

B+ Everything is going right for the surprising Panthers. Colorado's Rae Carruth, a big-play wideout, was a steal. Carolina's entire receiving corps combined for just four catches of more than 40 yards last year; Carruth himself had five TD catches of more than 42 yards. Somehow he slipped all the way to No. 27. The Panthers also added speed to their defense with Nebraska DB Mike Minter, who should contribute immediately at strong safety. Notre Dame LB Kinnon Tatum adds depth to a defense that is getting up in age.

CHICAGO BEARS

D First the Bears traded their top pick to Seattle for the enigmatic Rick Mirer. Then comes draft day, and they reach for a tight end with a big heart but not enough skills to make an impact. Chicago gave a sixth-rounder to move up two spots and take USC's John Allred, its highest-drafted TE since Mike Ditka in '61. Allred, who likes to surf, can block, and has decent hands, but he's slow, and has a history of injuries. Sorry, dude, you can't surf on Lake Michigan. Washington G Bob Sapp has trouble pass-blocking. The Bears also selected Northwestern's Darnell Autry, an explosive runner who slipped some in the draft. He joins a crowded backfield with Rashaan Salaam and Raymont Harris.



Reinard Wilson

CINCINNATI BENGALS

A Corey Dillon is going to push Kijana Carter into shape or out the door. The Bengals say they haven't lost faith in Carter, who showed up at the team's minicamp overweight following his disappointing season, but their selection of Dillon in the second round speaks volumes. Dillon gained a record 1,555 yards with 22 TDs for Washington in '96. Miami S Tremaine Mack (fourth round) blocked nine kicks in 18 games. The top pick, Florida State's Reinard Wilson (school-record 35 sacks), will be converted to LB from DE. Some scouts rated Michigan's Rod Payne (third round) as the best center in the draft. He will back up 11-year man Darrick Brilz.



Tom Knight

DALLAS COWBOYS

D The Cowboys gave the Eagles two picks (a fifth in '97 and third in '98) for a guy who would have been theirs all along: 6-7 TE David LaFleur, from LSU. A great blocker, with good hands, LaFleur got a big endorsement after working out with Troy Aikman, who said, "That's who I would like on our team." Dallas then traded out of the second round and took the fast but smallish OLB Dexter Coakley of Appalachian State with the Lions' pick in the third. Syracuse DT Antonio Anderson, a fourth-rounder, could become an impact player.

DENVER BRONCOS

C Denver's raid of the free-agent market provides the real help for next season. So you have to wonder about first-round pick Trevor Pryce (Clemson), what with the logjam on the defensive line, which now includes free agent Neil Smith, Michael Dean Perry, and Alfred Williams. And Pryce comes with some baggage. Why take the risk to fill a hole already filled? What the Broncos really need is secondary help, but they could not maneuver to get it. They did deal three picks to move up and snag C Dan Neil, who started every game at Texas and provides insurance for Mark Schlereth. S Cory Gilliard (Ball State), their only other pick, could stick.

DETROIT LIONS

B+ Bobby Ross saw the holes that finally got Wayne Fontes fired, and he hit them impressively: Bryant Westbrook (Texas), the fifth overall pick and the second-best corner in the draft behind Shawn Springs, and Kevin Abrams (Syracuse) for the secondary; big Juan Roque (Arizona State) for the suspect offensive line; and Matt Russell (Colorado), the

Butkus Award winner, for a shallow line-backing corps. The Lions had only 11 interceptions last year, but that should change now. Russell is a little undersized but has great instincts. Even the seventh-rounders, RB Terry Battle (Arizona State) and WR Marcus Harris (Wyoming), have a chance. Harris is not a burner, but he's big, with soft hands, and may turn out to be a real steal.



Ross Verba

GREEN BAY PACKERS

C What do you get the team that has everything? Not to worry; you can never have enough offensive-line help. Just one year after three of his first six choices were linemen, GM Ron Wolf took Iowa's Ross Verba with the 30th pick. He provides depth and a little security for those who may skip town for the "greener" pastures of free agency. William & Mary S Darren Sharper does the same for the secondary. One draftee who certainly will see some action is Penn State K Brett Conway, who replaces Chris Jacke.

HOUSTON OILERS

D+ Miami DE Kenny Holmes is definitely a strong pass rusher, but he seems soft against the run. And besides, didn't the Oilers need a DB to replace Chris Dishman, who left for Washington? They apparently couldn't trade up to get one, so they traded down five spots with K.C. to 18 and picked Holmes. With a thin secondary, expect LSU CB Denard Walker (third round) to get a good shot. Wideouts Joey Kent, a second-round pick out of Tennessee, and Derrick Mason, a fourth-rounder from Michigan State, should help. Also watch DE Pratt Lyons, from Troy State.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

C- Behind a porous line last year, Jim Harbaugh ran for his life too much, and Marshall Faulk often didn't have a breathing chance. Enter Tarik Glenn and Adam Meadows. Right thinking, questionable execution. Glenn, the 19th pick, was All-Pac-10 at Cal. Though he has quick feet for a big man, weight could be a problem. GM Bill Tobin compared him to Refrigerator Perry. Is that good or bad? As for Meadows, the second-rounder from Georgia, the rap on him is that he is not strong enough and will get bullied in the NFL trenches. The good news is that Notre Dame LB Bert Berry could be a standout, and San Diego State WR Nate Jacquet, a fifth-rounder, has raw ability.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

C+ Coach Tom Coughlin thought about trading up to draft Notre Dame's Renaldo Wynn, but decided to take his chances. The gamble paid off, as the defensive tackle he so badly coveted was still available to him in the 21st slot. Wynn, who had nine sacks and six tackles for losses last season, was the perfect fit, since the Jags ranked 19th against the run. They used their first four picks for defense, tabbing West Virginia S Mike Logan, UNC LB James Hamilton, and Cornell DT Seth Payne. Also watch Southern Illinois TE Damon Jones (fifth round).

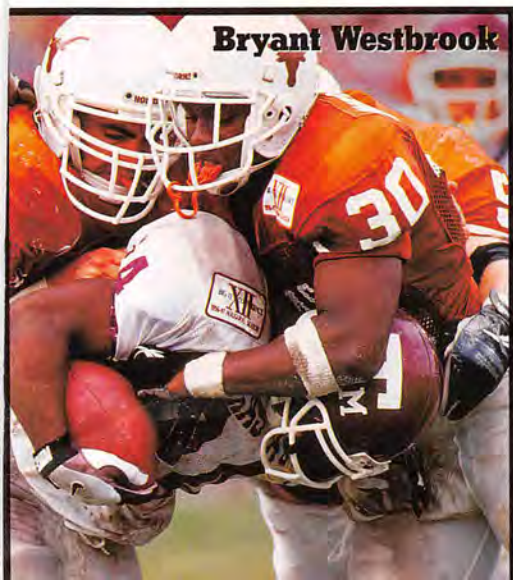
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

B For the low, low price of the 18th pick—plus picks in the third, fourth, and sixth rounds—the Chiefs got Cal's Tony Gonzalez and a fourth-rounder from the Oilers. He is the game-breaking tight end they have desperately coveted. He caught 53 passes for 768 yards and 5 TDs in '96, and fits perfectly into the West Coast offense, as does WR Kevin Lockett, the second-round pick who holds most of Kansas State's pass-catching records. Watch QB Pat Barnes (Gonzalez's roommate at Cal), who provides insurance in case Elvis Grbac doesn't work out. Steve Mariucci, who coached Barnes at Cal before going to the 49ers, says Barnes reminds him of Brett Favre. Same toughness.

MIAMI DOLPHINS

A Coach Jimmy Johnson came away with 14 players, including WR Yatil Green (Miami), the deep threat Dan Marino lacked last year. Green should team nicely with possession types Lawrence Dawsey and Fred Barnett. Johnson

ROSS F. DETTMAN (2)



10 BEST PICKS OF THE 90'S

1. Brett Favre, QB, Southern Miss Falcons, second round, 1991

Back in 1991, Ron Wolf, then with the New York Jets, ranked Favre the No. 1 player in the draft. Alas, the Jets had no first-round pick, having exercised it in the supplemental draft the previous summer for wide receiver Rob Moore. But heartbeats quickened in New York during the second round as Favre began to slip down the board. In the slot just before the Jets', the Falcons took Favre (and the Jets settled for Louisville QB Browning Nagle).

The Falcons didn't keep Favre, though. They already had Chris Miller, who passed for 26 TDs in '91. Atlanta's coach at the time, Jerry Glanville, peered into the future and saw...Billy Joe Tolliver?

Wolf became GM of the Packers late in '91, and later traded a first-round choice (OT Bob Whitfield) for Favre, a fair price for a player who would win back-to-back NFL MVP awards. Incidentally, the two quarterbacks picked ahead of Favre were Todd Marinovich, by the Raiders, and Dan McGwire, by Seattle.



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2. Terry Glenn, WR, Ohio State Patriots, first round, 1996

Bill Parcells fought this pick all the way to a new job with the New York Jets. He wanted to draft Baylor defensive tackle Darryl Gardener, who landed in Miami. The Tuna had been relieved of his personnel authority months before, however, and to his disgust, Glenn was the Patriots' pick. All Glenn did was catch a rookie-record 90 passes en route to the Super Bowl.

3. Shannon Sharpe, WR, Savannah State Broncos, seventh round, 1990

Known as the kid brother of Green Bay star Sterling Sharpe when he entered the NFL, as a wide receiver, Shannon has caught more passes (393) for more yards (4,884) than any tight end in the league.

4. Erik Williams, OT, Central State Cowboys, third round, 1991

One of the few clunkers made by Jimmy Johnson with the Cowboys was his decision to waste a first-round pick in the 1989 supplemental draft on Steve Walsh. Johnson eventually traded him to New Orleans for first- and third-round choices in '91 and a second-rounder in '92. He used the third-rounder to take Williams, who was in the Pro Bowl by his third season.

5. Bryce Paup, LB, Northern Iowa Packers, sixth round, 1990

This is a graphic example of how to draft a raw talent from a small school and then allow him to develop naturally. Paup was hurt most of his rookie season, but by early in his second year, he was an invaluable and versatile role player. By his third year, he was a starter; by his fourth, he was runner-up to Reggie White in Packer sacks; and by his fifth, he was in the Pro Bowl. That development also earned him a rich free-agent contract with Buffalo.

6. Mark Brunell, QB, Washington Packers, fifth round, 1993

The Packers acquired Favre and drafted Ty Detmer the year before they selected Brunell, whose development in college was hamstrung by having to share the job with Billy Joe Hobert. In 1995 the Pack traded him to Jacksonville. In 1996 the Jaguars were in the AFC final. Brunell took every snap a year ago, leading the NFL in passing yards (4,367) and all QBs in rushing (396 yards).

7. Gus Frerotte, QB, Tulsa Redskins, seventh round, 1994

The Redskins selected Heath Shuler as their QB of the future with the third pick overall in 1994. In the last round, they took Frerotte. The move paid off. Shuler, who passed up his final year at Tennessee, was hopelessly lost in Norv Turner's playbook. Frerotte took all but one of the team's snaps in '96, and had the second-lowest interception rate (2.3) in the NFL.

8. Leon Lett, DT, Emporia State Cowboys, seventh round, 1991

Even taking into account some of his legendary negatives on the field (the hotdogging incident in Super Bowl XXVII that was foiled by Buffalo's Don Beebe, and the 1993 Thanksgiving snow slide, which led to a Miami upset), Lett has been a dominant defensive lineman.

9. Zach Thomas, LB, Texas Tech Dolphins, fifth round, 1996

Thomas has been compared to another outstanding Dolphin middle linebacker, Nick Buoniconti. Like Buoniconti, he made an immediate impact. Installed as a rookie starter, Thomas had an interception at Buffalo later in the year that turned around Jimmy Johnson's first season in Miami. He finished as the No. 5 tackler in the league.

10. Lee Woodall, LB, West Chester 49ers, sixth round, 1994

Most NFL teams felt Woodall had the skills and intelligence to make a good pro linebacker, but he played in Division II, making him something of a risk. The 49ers acted upon their convictions and got a rare talent, a player who started 15 games as a rookie and was in the Pro Bowl by his second year.

—Larry Felser



Dwayne Rudd

thought about grabbing QB Jim Druckenmiller, but couldn't pass up a potentially faster Michael Irvin-type. As for the rest, two second-rounders, CB Sam Madison (Louisville) and DE Jason Taylor (Akron), were expected to go in the first round, and OT Jerome Daniels (Northwestern) could turn out to be a sleeper in the fourth round. Third-round OLB Derrick Rodgers (Arizona State) needs to learn more about the position.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

C Alabama LB Dwayne Rudd was considered an impact player who would be drafted in the top 10. Instead, he went to the Vikes at No. 20. Most observers felt the Vikings would go for a running back, such as Washington's Corey Dillon, especially since Robert Smith is still a question mark and Leroy Hoard is not a feature back. But Dennis Green wanted to upgrade his defense, which ranked 24th against the rush, and he couldn't pass on Rudd, who may find his way into the middle quickly. In fact, Green went for



Ike Hilliard

defense in his first five picks: Virginia Tech CBs Torrian Gray and Antonio Banks, LB Stalin Colinet (Boston College), and lineman Tony Williams (Memphis).

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

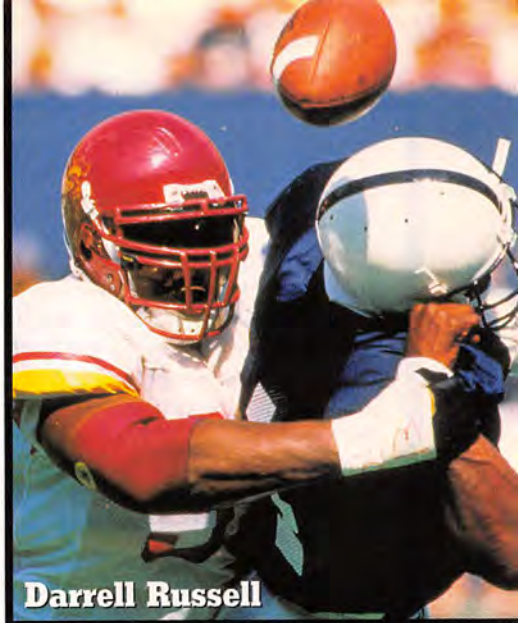
B The Pats ranked 28th in pass defense, then lost Bill Parcells. But they got splendid CB Chris Canty (Kansas State) with the 29th pick, DT Brandon Mitchell (Texas A&M) in the second round, and S Chris Carter (Texas) in the third. Canty (13 interceptions in 1995-96) should start. Another good choice was Iowa's all-time rushing leader Sedrick Shaw, who was obtained with the first pick in the third round as compensation for losing Parcells. And watch G Damon Denson (Michigan), who could play his way into the starting lineup by midseason.



Danny Wuerffel

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

D Ditka loves those big, tough guys, but with the 10th pick, Mike? Colorado G Chris Naeole is legit, but there were impact players still on the board who could have helped the 3-13 Saints more. Heisman winner Danny Wuerffel (Florida), taken in the fourth round, was a worthwhile pick, and S Rob Kelly (Ohio State) and DE Jared Tomich (Nebraska), both second-round picks, will help. Yet the player who could be a star is Iowa State RB Troy Davis, at No. 62. The knocks on him are his size and questionable hands, but he rushed for 2,185 yards and 21 TDs as the Heisman runner-up.



Darrell Russell

NEW YORK GIANTS

C- We like Ike, as in Hilliard, the talented WR from Florida. He can be a big-play guy, but at No. 7 overall? That's questionable because of one reason: Dave Brown. A good receiver, especially a young one, can only be effective with a good quarterback, and the Giants don't have one. Well, at least the Giants got Virginia's Tiki Barber, the back they said is the next Dave Meggett. Now Brown has someone to dump passes to. The Giants then filled the void left by the departure of punter Mike Horan with Ball State's Brad Maynard. But they did not get help for the offensive line, which they need almost as much as a new quarterback.

NEW YORK JETS

B+ Bill Parcells traded the No. 1 spot and turned six picks into 11, opting for quantity and only a little less quality. The Jets added beef to their defensive line with UNC's Rick Terry (second round), Ronnie Dixon (a trade with the Eagles), and Georgia's Jason Ferguson (seventh round). The real help on defense comes with top pick James Farrior, the OLB from Virginia who might bump Marvin Jones out the door. Parcells compared third-round choice, WR Dedric Ward (Northern Iowa), to "a young Dave Meggett."

OAKLAND RAIDERS

D "Orlando Pace was the best offensive player in the draft," Raiders coach Joe Bugel said, "but we felt Darrell Russell was the best player in the draft." Russell, the highest Raiders' pick since '67, isn't a bad consolation prize. An All-Pac-10 selection for the last two years, he recorded 19 tackles for a loss in '96. But the rap on him is that he has a

10 WORST PICKS OF THE 90'S

1. Todd Marinovich, QB, USC Raiders, first round, 1991

Marinovich literally had Raider blood running through his veins. His father, Marv, was an ex-Raider guard and strength coach. Todd was destined for the Silver and Black from birth, but a few problems cropped up. By the time Marinovich was a sophomore at USC, he was considered almost uncoachable. The Trojans didn't argue when he declared early for the NFL. The Raiders drafted Marinovich (passing on Brett Favre) in the first round despite his "I'd rather be surfin'" mentality. You can still catch a glimpse of Todd when the surf's up.

2. Lawrence Phillips, RB, Nebraska Rams, first round, 1996

The Cornhuskers, up to their clavicles in police-blotter cases, had suggested to Phillips that he might not want to use his last year of eligibility. Cut to Rams owner Georgia Frontiere, at draft headquarters in 1996. With the sixth pick in the first round, St. Louis chose Phillips. "My football people assured me he would be all right," said Madam Ram. A lot of NFL personnel compared Phillips to Jimmy Brown. Maybe they meant James Brown? Phillips (632 yards) could produce yet, but the jury is still out.

3. Lincoln Kennedy, OT, Washington Falcons, first round, 1993

He was a big talent at the University of Washington, but Lincoln Kennedy looked more like William Howard Taft in his brief career in Atlanta. The question wasn't whether he could open holes with his immense girth, but whether he would need oxygen after he did so. To his credit, he started 16 games with the Raiders last fall.

4. Tommy Maddox, QB, UCLA Broncos, first round, 1992

Two atrocious career moves here: one by Maddox and one by Dan Reeves. Maddox came out of UCLA with two years of eligibility remaining, but he never reminded anyone in Denver of John Elway. After Reeves was fired by the Broncos and then hired by the Giants, he signed Maddox. The Giants fired Reeves after the '96 season and Atlanta hired him. Stay tuned.

5. Bruce Pickens, DB, Nebraska Falcons, first round, 1991

The Falcons keep taking dead aim and end up shooting themselves between the big toe and the little toe. Pickens was the third player chosen overall in '91. The Falcons could have drafted Herman Moore, Eric Swann, or Todd Lyght. When he finally showed up after a lengthy hold-out, Pickens couldn't make it through the first practice.

"Do you think he'll make an impact?" a reporter asked Jerry Glanville.

"I can't tell until he stops throwing up," replied the coach. Pickens didn't make a dent, much less an impact, with Atlanta or any other NFL team.

6. Huey Richardson, LB, Florida Steelers, first round, 1991

Granted, the draft of '91 was not a memorable one, especially by the 15th slot, where the Steelers selected. But they should have known better. "I wouldn't touch this guy with a 10-foot pole," said one general manager. "He can't play at all." The Steelers should have gotten a 30-foot pole. Richardson, who played for three teams in as many years, is now out of football.

7. Bruce Walker, DT, UCLA Eagles, second round, 1994

Walker was grossly overweight and considered a risk by most NFL teams. The Eagles could have chosen Larry Allen, Brenston Buckner, Jason Sehorn, or Bert Emanuel. Instead, they took Walker, a symbol of the ineptitude of the Rich Kotite era. The Eagles' first-round pick that year was no bargain, either: Georgia offensive tackle Bernard Williams, who didn't make the team.

8. Patrick Bates, DB, Texas A&M Raiders, first round, 1993

This pick was more a franchise error than a player failure. Al Davis used the 12th selection in the first round on Bates, who didn't want to be a Raider. He sat out the 1995 season, and days before the '96 draft, was traded for a second-round pick to Atlanta, which released him in April of '97.

9. Johnny Mitchell, TE, Nebraska Jets, first round, 1992

Mitchell had just about everything—speed, hands, quickness, moves—when he came out of Nebraska after his sophomore year. What he didn't have was maturity. It's an old Jet story. On the very next pick of that draft, the Raiders selected Chester McGlockton, the dominating defensive lineman. Dallas followed by taking Kevin Smith, who became a starting cornerback. Later on in the first round, Kansas City selected Dale Carter.

10. Steve Walsh, QB, Miami Cowboys, first round, 1989

Walsh was like a coach on the field for Jimmy Johnson at Miami University. His one flaw was the lack of a major-league passing arm—no big deal in college, but lethal in the NFL. Still, Dallas exercised its 1990 first-round pick on Walsh in the '89 supplemental draft. The puzzling part was that Johnson had taken Troy Aikman in the previous draft. When the Cowboys finished 1-15 and would have had the first pick in the '90 draft had they not used it on Walsh, they missed out on adding Junior Seau or Cortez Kennedy to their roster. —Larry Felser



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tendency to make one great play, then take three off. The Raiders drafted tackles Adam Treu (Nebraska) and Tim Kohn (Iowa State) with their two third-round picks, but they're no Orlando Pace.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

D Tim Duncan is available. Oh, that's who the Sixers need. Well, at 6-7, Jon Harris is only a couple of inches shorter than Duncan, and coach Ray Rhodes brags about all the passes Harris will knock down at left DE in place of William Fuller. Give credit to the Eagles for duping Dallas. By preying on the Cowboys' desire for TE David LaFleur, they got an extra fifth-round pick and a third-rounder next year in exchange for moving down only three spots. South Carolina RB Duce Staley looks like a good move, what with Ricky Watters possibly flying the coop after next season. Maybe two Detmers (brother Koy joins Ty) are better than one. They are certainly better than one Rodney Peete.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

B The drafting of DB Chad Scott with the 24th pick spells the end for Rod Woodson. Since the Steelers had already lost Deon Figures and Willie Williams, and were having trouble negotiating with Woodson, a fan favorite at Three Rivers and a seven-time Pro Bowler, Scott was a no-brainer. He began his career at Towson State on a partial scholarship, only to star later at Maryland. Scott is known as a fierce competitor, which should fit well in Iron City. In the second round, the Steelers nabbed San Diego State WR Will Blackwell, who caught 146 passes for 2,207 yards during the last two years. WR Mike Adams, a seventh-rounder from Texas, could also surprise.

SAINT LOUIS RAMS

B+ Orlando Pace should get a contract similar to the six-year \$15 million deal Keyshawn Johnson received as the top pick last year. But the lineman who may surprise is C Ryan Tucker (TCU), a fourth-rounder called the "third-best offensive lineman in the draft" by Dick Vermeil. The Rams also picked up CB Dexter McCleon (Clemson) to help with a suspect secondary.



SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

D- Three times in the past, GM Bobby Beathard has traded his first pick, but this year he waited until the fifth round to make a move—dealing next year's third- and fourth-rounders to move up twice. Earlier, he tried and failed to get Denver's first pick at No. 28 and Baltimore's second choice at No. 34. TE Freddie Jones (North Carolina) looks like a decent blocker, and North Carolina A&T's Michael Hamilton could be a starter at OLB.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

C This grade could become a B or an F, depending on how Virginia Tech QB Jim Druckenmiller pans out. The Niners had only three picks in the draft, and Druckenmiller's the guy they wanted at No. 26. He's the heir apparent to Steve Young, and the first QB taken in the first round by the Niners since Steve Spurrier in 1967. The Niners traded up in the second round to get FB Marc Edwards (Notre Dame), who is insurance for gimpy William Floyd. With their final pick, they grabbed TE Greg Clark (Stanford) in the third round to help spell Brent Jones.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

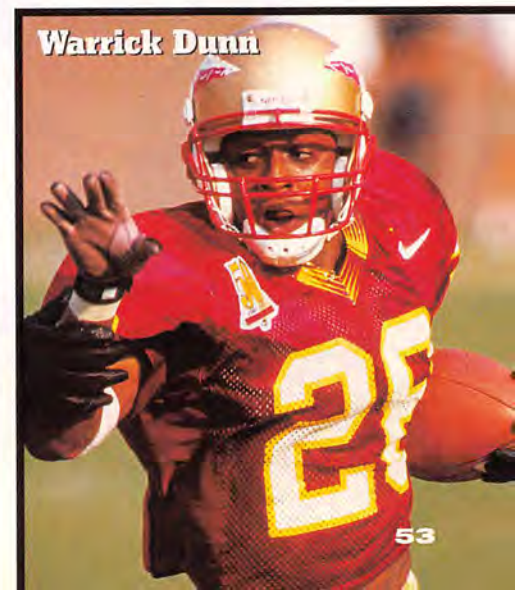
A+ Seattle picked up two big-time starters in Shawn Springs and Walter Jones. Give coach Dennis Erickson credit, as he traded with Atlanta to get the third pick (Springs), then dealt with Tampa Bay for the sixth pick (Jones). Springs, who left Ohio State with a year of eligibility remaining, was considered the best in a strong draft of DBs. Florida State's Jones will start at left tackle for what Erickson hopes is the next 10 years. That will allow Seattle to move James Atkins to right guard. With their sixth-round pick, Seattle took TE Itula Mili (BYU).

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

A Tony Dungy brought success to the Bucs over the second part of last season. Now he has had a spectacular draft, beginning with Florida State RB Warrick Dunn, a three-time 1,000-yard rusher who is also a good receiver. With their second pick in the first round, the Bucs chose speedy Florida WR Reidel Anthony, who found the end zone one out of every five catches. He should bolster an offense that was No. 28 in the NFL last year, along with OT Jerry Wunsch (Wisconsin) and G Frank Middleton (Arizona).

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

B With the No. 28 defense and a dreadful front seven, the Redskins used their first three picks, and six of eight overall, for defensive players. They were thrilled, especially with Miami DE Kenard Lang in the first round and Colorado LB Greg Jones in the second. They will boost a unit that was last versus the run. The 'Skins, who signed free-agent CB Cris Dishman and S Jesse Campbell, hope that third-round LB Derek Smith (Arizona State) and fifth-round S Jamel Williams (Nebraska) contribute. ■



GOA GWING



GARROUSEL



**WHEN THE NFL
MERRY-GO-ROUND
STOPPED FOR
THE 1997 SEASON,
THERE WERE
11 FACES
IN NEW PLACES.**

by Don Pierson, *Chicago Tribune*
illustrations by Martin Mayo

The National Football League has experienced its largest turnover in head coaches since 1978. In that year, there were 15 changes, the most in the 28-year history of the AFL-NFL merger. In the 18 seasons between 1978 and this year, the average coaching turnover was fewer than six per year. Suddenly, the league is so shaken that Mike Ditka has turned from a Bear into a Saint.

Whether it's a trend or an anomaly, coaches feel more pressure than ever to win, and sense more impatience than ever on the part of owners, fans, and the media.

"When you're changing 33 percent of an industry, that's quite a volatile arrangement," said Bill Parcells of the New York Jets, a man in the eye of the storm. "I think it is impatience. But when you sign up in this business, it's with an element of risk. There's change everywhere, not just in football."

FIRING LINE

If Dick Vermeil of the St. Louis Rams felt burned out with the Philadelphia Eagles 14 years ago, he is more likely to be torched out this time around. In today's climate of free agency and fast fixes, and with huge debt on owners of expensive franchises, Pittsburgh's Chuck Noll would have been in big trouble following his 1-13 inaugural season, and Dallas's Tom Landry might not have survived as an 0-11-1 expansion team.

The stunning success of Carolina and Jacksonville, both of which advanced to conference title games in their second season, did nothing to soothe the climate of great expectations. So-called rebuilding pro-

grams suddenly lost all meaning.

Carolina Panthers coach Dom Capers found every one of his NFC West coaching colleagues out of a job after he beat them. Capers is the dean of his division after only two seasons. But three of the new coaches now chasing him are old faces. Ditka of the New Orleans Saints and Vermeil were talked out of their comfortable TV booths, and Dan Reeves of the Atlanta Falcons brings his résumé as the winningest active coach to his third team.

FAMILIAR FACES

In fact, eight of the 11 new coaches are familiar faces. Parcells and Ditka are former Super Bowl winners. Vermeil, Reeves, and Bobby Ross of the Detroit Lions have been there. Joe Bugel of the Oakland Raiders, Bruce Coslet of the Cincinnati Bengals, and Pete Carroll of the New England Patriots have been NFL head coaches before. Only Kevin Gilbride of the San Diego Chargers, Jim Fassel of the New York Giants, and Steve Mariucci of the San Francisco 49ers are first-timers.

All 11 are white, an affront to qualified minority candidates curiously left out of the biggest makeover in nearly 20 years. In a sport now employing 67 percent minority players, hiring 11 white coaches for 11 openings gives the appearance of a giant leap backward.

"I'm not embarrassed," NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue said. "We're working on it."

Pushing him are African-American assistant coaches who met with the commissioner to clarify hiring procedures and practices that obviously lag far behind the times. Only three African-Americans hold head coaching jobs: Dennis Green

of the Minnesota Vikings, Ray Rhodes of the Philadelphia Eagles, and Tony Dungy of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

"All we asked for is fairness," said Johnny Roland, offensive backfield coach of the Arizona Cardinals. "If we're hired, don't be afraid to fire us if we're not doing the job. Fire us just like they fire everybody else, if that's what they're sensitive to."

DEAN'S LIST

Firing is not something owners seem shy about doing. The dean is Marv Levy. At 72, he is the oldest coach since Chicago Bears founder George Halas, who coached until he was 73. Levy is starting his 12th season with the Buffalo Bills. In second place is Marty Schottenheimer, beginning his ninth season with the Kansas City Chiefs. In third place is Green, by one day over Mike Holmgren of the Green Bay Packers and 11 days over Bill Cowher of the Pittsburgh Steelers; all are starting their sixth season. Of the nine changes made in 1992, Green, Holmgren, and Cowher are the only coaches left.

"I think there is an impatience," Levy said. "It comes from lots of sources—fans, talk shows. Everybody is allowed to be an authority. The grumbles spill over on people who make the decisions."

"I think there is growing pressure," said Jimmy Johnson of the Miami Dolphins. "You have more ownership that is business-oriented, fewer family-owned franchises that were more likely to hang with a coach. Because of the business part, with owners trying to put more people in the stands, sell more suites, and market their teams, owners become dissatisfied with the head coach quicker."

Carroll is returning after an ill-fated

experiment with the Jets that lasted only one year, in 1994. "I'm 80 years old; I want to win now," said Jets owner Leon Hess, now 83, two coaches later.

Rich Brooks got dumped by the Rams after only two years, the second of which (1996) he started a rookie at quarterback.

"I don't think you'll see 10 or 11 changes every year, but I do think people are more impatient now," Holmgren said. "I'm fortunate I don't have that type of pressure on me. I have pressure to win, certainly, but the club has made a long-term commitment to me."

Holmgren is amazed by Landry, Noll, and Don Shula, coaches who lasted more than 20 years in the same place. "I know how you feel at the end of a season," said Holmgren. "My stomach's all screwed up. It takes me about a month to get back to normal sleeping patterns."

JOB INSECURITY

Trouble is, coaches no longer have the luxury of that month to rest. Free agency has turned the job into a year-round grind of recruiting and adjusting.

"No question this system puts the burden directly on the coach," said Carolina general manager Bill Polian, the NFL executive of the year. "In the old days, coaching was a function of taking players, having them for a long period of time, and creating a system that took advantage of their abilities. Now, you have to retool virtually every year, reteach, and change your methods, because players turn over every year. It's so much tougher on coaches."

Not surprisingly, the competitive natures of the best coaches draws them to the crucible as a moth is attracted to a flame. The excitement is in the challenge, and the challenge has never been greater.

"I could not get rid of the little fire inside burning," Vermeil said, revealing he was never entirely burned out.

"I wouldn't want to be a 20- or 30-year-old head coach for the first time and have that kind of pressure," said Johnson, "but in my situation, hey, I'll be the first one to walk if we don't win. Nobody

NFL

coaches (from left) Joe Bugel, Pete Carroll, and Jim Fassel are on the firing line.



is going to have to call a radio show to say get rid of Jimmy Johnson. I didn't come back for security or any other reason other than to win ball games.

"Pressure doesn't bother me at all. A younger guy who's got to prove himself and learn on the job, it may take him a little longer, and I don't know if owners will be patient with a younger guy."

The youngest of the new group is Marucci, 41. After one year as head coach at Cal, preceded by four years as an assistant with Green Bay, he steps into shoes left by George Seifert, who won 100 games faster than any coach in NFL history.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

Vermeil and Ditka follow Johnson and Parcells out of the TV booth, where they never felt as high as they did on the field. Ditka claimed he never had any intention of returning until Saints owner Tom Benson and GM Bill Kuharich talked him into it. Although Ditka had inquiries from other teams after the Bears fired him in 1993, no one offered him a job until the Saints. In an unusual move, Ditka opted for a three-year contract, even though the Saints wanted to commit to five years.

"If we can't change this in that time, I asked them to get somebody else," Ditka said.

Money is a lure, or course. Johnson was the first to break the \$2-million-a-year barrier, and Parcells followed. After 14 years away, Vermeil called his estimated five-year, \$9 million deal "more money than I ever dreamt of." But money rarely is the primary motivator of coaches, who could probably make more working by the hour. Benson guessed Ditka might be taking a pay cut from his lucrative motivational speaking engagements, in addition to his salary from NBC. The Saints are paying him an estimated \$1.3 million a year.

"The coaches want to get to the pinnacle again," Johnson said. "As much as I enjoyed TV, I never had the great feelings or the horrible feelings in TV that I have coaching football. And I want that. The misery of being 1-15 [in 1989] made that first Super Bowl win fantastic."

When people ask Levy whether he is contemplating retirement, he bristles, not

because he fears retirement but because he knows he can't allow himself the luxury of planning it. His business is too intense to leave room for idle thoughts.

"If you have a timetable on when to retire, you don't know it, but you've already retired," Levy said.

Ted Marchibroda of the Baltimore Ravens is one coach who sees no change in the pressure to win or the impatience of owners. "I think 11 [coaching] changes is just coincidence," Marchibroda said. "The year I went to Indianapolis [1992], there were nine changes. It's just an individual matter with owners. You had to win then. You have to win now."

In college, you've also got a wide spectrum of talent. The University of Florida knows it's going to win certain games, it's just by how much [is the question]. In our business, there are 30 teams, and any one team can beat the other. Only one [will come] out feeling like it has accomplished what it set out to do, and that's the team that wins the Super Bowl. The other 29 teams end up on a losing note."

Last year, expansion infants Carolina and Jacksonville added another comparison. They didn't win it all, but they got to the final four in only their second season. Mike Shanahan of the Denver Broncos went 13-3, but lost to Jacksonville in the AFC playoffs.

"When you have two teams who did as well as they did, it puts more pressure on everybody else," Shanahan said. "The average fan doesn't understand the salary cap or the structure. All he knows is that two organizations came in and played extremely well in their second year of existence. How come you didn't?"

SALARY CAP AND FREE AGENCY

The salary cap and free agency are the twin engines that propel player movement. While stability in management and coaching would seem to be an antidote to mobility among players, it didn't work that way in 1997. Ditka and Vermeil, like Johnson and Parcells, return to an unfamiliar system. Supposedly, no coach is able to use the threat of firing players to quite the same effect as before because of the salary cap.

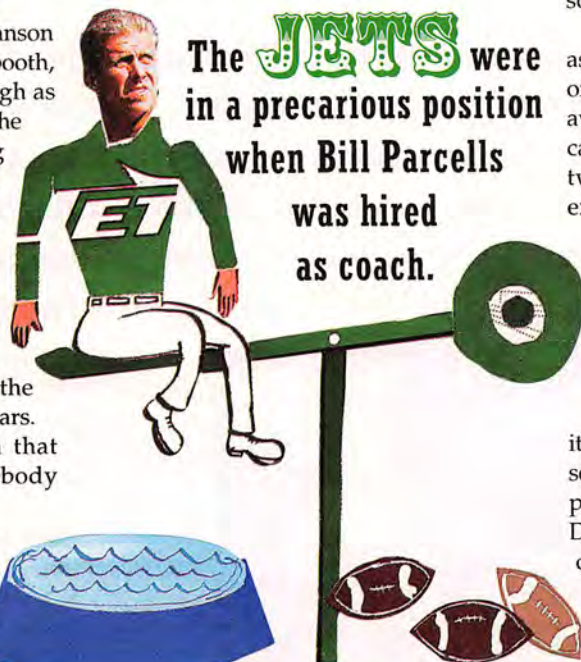
Ditka has found a new enemy: the architect of the cap. "I can only say it took somebody a long time to screw it up as much as they did," he said. "To set football back this far, to make it a game of numbers instead of a game of people, is really appalling to me."

Yet the appeal remains. Overcoming obstacles is not only what these guys do, it's why they do it.

"Our job is hard by its nature," Infante said. "Some coaches worry more than others. All you can do is give it an honest day's work, look in the mirror, and say, 'I did everything I could.'"

"Somebody asked me recently, 'Is there anything more fun than being an NFL coach?'" Levy said. "I had to say, 'Probably not.'"

The **JETS** were in a precarious position when Bill Parcells was hired as coach.



WINNER'S CIRCLE

In Marchibroda's case, not even winning was enough. Twice he was let go by the Colts after winning. In Baltimore from 1975-79, he was 41-36. In Indianapolis from 1992-95, he took a 1-15 team to 9-7 his first year and to the AFC title game his last, only to find himself looking for work both times.

Marchibroda's successor in Indianapolis, Lindy Infante, explained why the pressure of the NFL is so much greater than the pressure of college:

"In college, you can go to a bowl game and have a good year even if you don't win the bowl game. It's not like you have to win the national championship to be thought of as a good football team.

diary of a rookie

by Amani Toomer and Bill Heller

amani Toomer would experience spectacular highs and numbing lows in his rookie season with the New York Giants. The wide receiver from the University of Michigan, who caught 143 passes for 2,657 yards and 18 TDs with the run-happy Wolverines, was the Giants' second draft choice (after Oklahoma defensive end Cedric Jones) in 1996. He agreed to share his thoughts and experiences during his first NFL season with Street & Smith's readers.

Friday, July 19

Training camp begins for the Giants at their new preseason home, the State University of New York at Albany, but neither Jones nor Toomer has signed. Giants coach Dan Reeves is not pleased:

"Every day those guys are out, there's no question that hurts. If you're a rookie, there's just too much that you have to make up."

Sunday, July 21

Toomer signs his contract, which includes a \$10,000 donation to the Pop Warner Football League that he played in at Berkeley, California, and \$100 to youth football programs in New York and New Jersey for each catch he makes in the '96 season.

The programs helped me when I was growing up. It's important to be a role model, to give back to the community that raised and supported you.

Monday, July 22

His first NFL practice. Toomer is physically imposing, towering over the other wide receivers, who pair up and play catch. Sprints follow, then Toomer shags punts, takes part in blocking, agility, and passing drills, and performs well in a scrimmage.



"Amani looked good," says Reeves. "He's a big target. He's got receiving skills and he's tough. He doesn't seem that fast because he has a long stride, but he runs away from you."

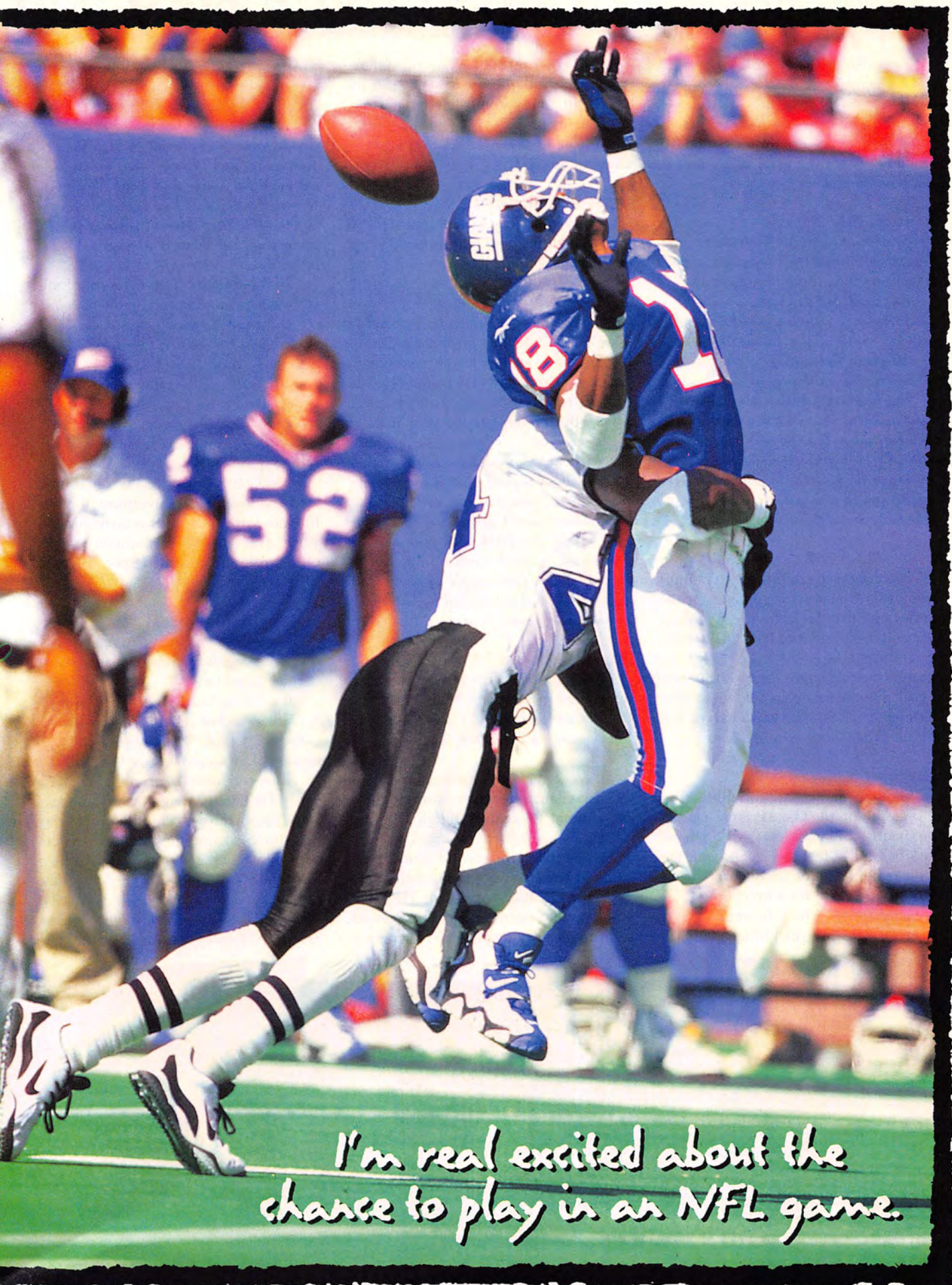
Giants fans plead for autographs as the players leave the field. "We love you, Amani!" yells one fan. Toomer signs programs and footballs as he threads his way back to the locker room.

I was a little nervous. I feel that every time I go out there, I have to prove something. I want to take advantage of every opportunity I get, contribute any way I can.

There's more stuff to do on your own here. At Michigan, they made you go to treatment, they made you do a lot. But this, if you won't want to do it, you don't have to...but you just might not be around.

Saturday, July 27

A crowd of 8,500 turns out for an intrasquad, controlled scrimmage. With Tommy Maddox at quarterback, Toomer runs a crossing route and makes a diving, 34-yard catch. On a punt return, he cuts up the sideline for 25 yards before being stopped.



*I'm real excited about the
chance to play in an NFL game.*

Deep down, I knew I could play, but

Actually, it was a middle return and I misjudged it. But I made something happen anyway. I went out there and tried to turn a few heads. This camp is much harder than I thought it would be. There are a lot of blitzes you have to pick up.

Monday, July 29

The Giants continue two-a-day practices even though the preseason opener at Jacksonville is only four days away.

I'm tired, but I'm getting more comfortable with being out there and with the speed of the game. I'm real excited about the chance to play in an NFL game—even though it's preseason.

My legs are a little sore, and my mind's not as sharp as it was the first couple of days. But the point of training camp is to fight through those things, so that when the fourth quarter comes, you're mentally prepared for your body being physically fatigued.

Friday, August 2

Second on the depth chart, behind Thomas Lewis, at wide receiver for the game against Jacksonville, Toomer returns the second-half kickoff 20 yards. He returns a second kickoff 22 yards, fumbles the ball at the Giants' 27, but gets it back. On the first pass thrown to him, Toomer catches a 12-yarder over the middle. The Giants win 24-17.

Saturday, August 10

Toomer makes an indelible first impression on the Giants' fans, against the visiting Baltimore Ravens. With New York behind 12-0 in the second quarter, Toomer fields a kick on his own 6 and returns it 94 yards for a touchdown.

In the second half, he catches four passes for 79 yards, including a 37-yard

touchdown from Stan White and a nine-yarder to the Baltimore 6, which sets up a TD with nine seconds left in the game. The Giants lose 37-27.

I tried to show the coaches what I could do tonight.

Saturday, August 17

Toomer has one kickoff return for 25 yards and three punt returns for 33 yards in a 13-6 loss to the Jets.

Friday, August 23

The Giants get clobbered by visiting Carolina 34-7. Toomer finishes the Giants' 1-3 preseason as their leading receiver in catches (8) and yards (144), and No. 1 in kickoff-return yards (163) and average (40.8). But he has played very little at wide receiver.

I use not playing as a motivation. I keep telling myself, "Wait until I get my chance." Sometimes I get discouraged when I don't get in, but I have to stay ready. My freshman year at Michigan, we had a rotation of five receivers. The first couple of games, I didn't play that much, but by the end of the year, I was starting.

Monday, August 26

Toomer takes up residence in an apartment in Secaucus, New Jersey.

It's not bad. But it's noisy and a long commute to Giants Stadium.

Sunday evening, September 1

The Giants open their season at home on national TV against Buffalo. Toomer has switched uniform numbers, from 18 to 89. He fields his second punt of the night at the 13, starts to his right, cuts back quickly, and sees a seam. He accelerates into the open and sets a club record with an electrifying 87-yard return for a

TD, giving New York a 10-0 lead and sending the fans and the Giants' sideline into happy delirium.

When I caught the ball, I really couldn't see the hole until I beat the first guy. Then I knew I was going to get past the punter and score. That put to rest the doubts I had about playing in the NFL. Deep down, I always felt I could play, but there is always a little bit of doubt.

In the fourth quarter, Toomer foolishly fair-catches a punt on the 5.

It'll never happen again. I didn't realize what yard line I was on. Everybody said, "What are you doing?" Going from college to the pros is definitely a big adjustment. You have to watch everybody else and learn from others. You have to have a lot of self-confidence. You can't get down.

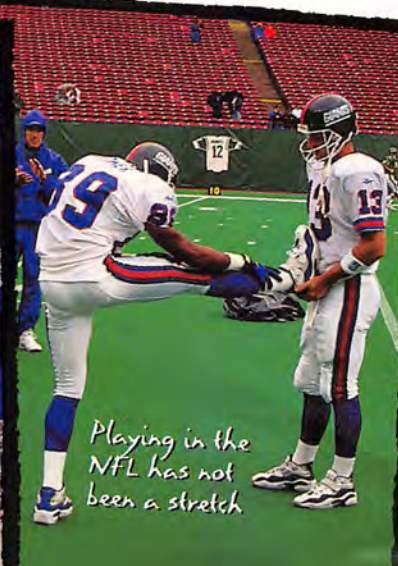
The Giants squander a 17-7 half-time lead and lose 23-20 in overtime. Toomer finishes with four punt returns for 113 yards, averages 18.7 yards on three kickoff returns, and is named Special Teams MVP by Reeves.

Sunday, September 8

On his 22nd birthday, Toomer learns that he is starting against Dallas in place of the injured Lewis.

It could be tough, but I'll be ready. A reporter asked if Deion Sanders can catch me. I said, "I hope I find out, because that means I have the ball."

Toomer returns the opening kickoff 25 yards. On the first play from scrimmage, Dave Brown throws behind Toomer, who had stumbled, and the pass is intercepted. On a reverse, Toomer and former Michigan teammate Tyrone Wheatley fumble the exchange for an 18-yard loss. With Dallas leading 27-0, Toomer makes his first NFL reception, for 12 yards.



here is always a little bit of doubt.

Sunday, September 15

Lewis returns and Toomer sees little action in a 31-10 home loss to Washington. Three games into the season, the Giants are 0-3 and Toomer has one catch.

We haven't been throwing my way a lot, but I have to be an optimist. I'll catch seven or eight one game. Every time we play, I want my head clear and I want to have a good shot at winning. I've been getting good time and good opportunities. I feel like I'm getting better every day.

Sunday, September 22

Toomer returns three punts for 37 yards and one kickoff for 25 in a 13-6 victory over the Jets.

I really don't see myself as strictly a returner. It's funny, because that's how it's turning out.

Sunday, September 29

The Giants stun unbeaten Minnesota 15-10. Toomer returns three punts, including one for 30 yards. But with the Giants leading 12-10 in the fourth, he drops a perfect throw from Brown on a crossing pattern, which would have produced a first down inside the Minnesota 25.

I was supposed to run a seven-step route and ran it in nine steps. When I turned around, the ball hit me right in the face mask. I want to do something to contribute, and it winds up being a drop. The players are a lot quicker than I thought.

Sunday, October 6

On a bye week, Toomer drives to Atlantic City.

The major difference from college is that in the NFL I watch a lot of film—five or six hours every week. I'm getting into a practice routine. I feel more comfortable. I'm getting used to the long hours.

Sunday, October 13

At home against the Eagles, Toomer fields a second-quarter punt on his own 35. Using a block by Coleman Rudolph, he breaks to the left sideline, then cuts back to the middle and goes in for a TD.

"He's amazing," Reeves says. "Some guys go through their careers as good returners and never score a touchdown. It shows his blazing speed."

A reporter asked if Rudolph's block on the runback was a clip, and I said, "If it was a clip, the ref would have called it." You try to set up your blocks. I didn't even think I'd be returning punts. I thought I'd be a receiver, and that would be it. I'm just trying to do all I can in practice to get myself on the field more.

Sunday, October 20

On the road against the Redskins, Toomer returns one punt for nine yards and three kickoffs for 40. On the last play of the first half, the Giants try a desperation pass. Going up for the ball in the end zone, Toomer injures his right knee.

I slowed down to catch the ball and jumped. My legs buckled. I didn't even fall. I played in the second half.

Thursday, October 24

After practice, Toomer sees a doctor and learns that his season is over.

The doctor thought it was a partial tear of the ACL, but it was completely torn, and so was some cartilage. It's weird. It just doesn't bother me that much. I had never been injured at Michigan.

"It's a blow," Reeves says. "I hate it for the team, but I hate it more for Amani. He's a guy we thought would spend the first half of the season learning and then play a lot in the second half."

At the time of the injury, Toomer is second in the NFL in punt returns, averaging 16.6 yards. He has averaged 17.4 yards on 11 kickoff returns. But he has caught just one pass.

Thursday, October 31

Toomer goes on injured reserve.

The only thing I can do is get my knee back through rehab.

Wednesday, November 27

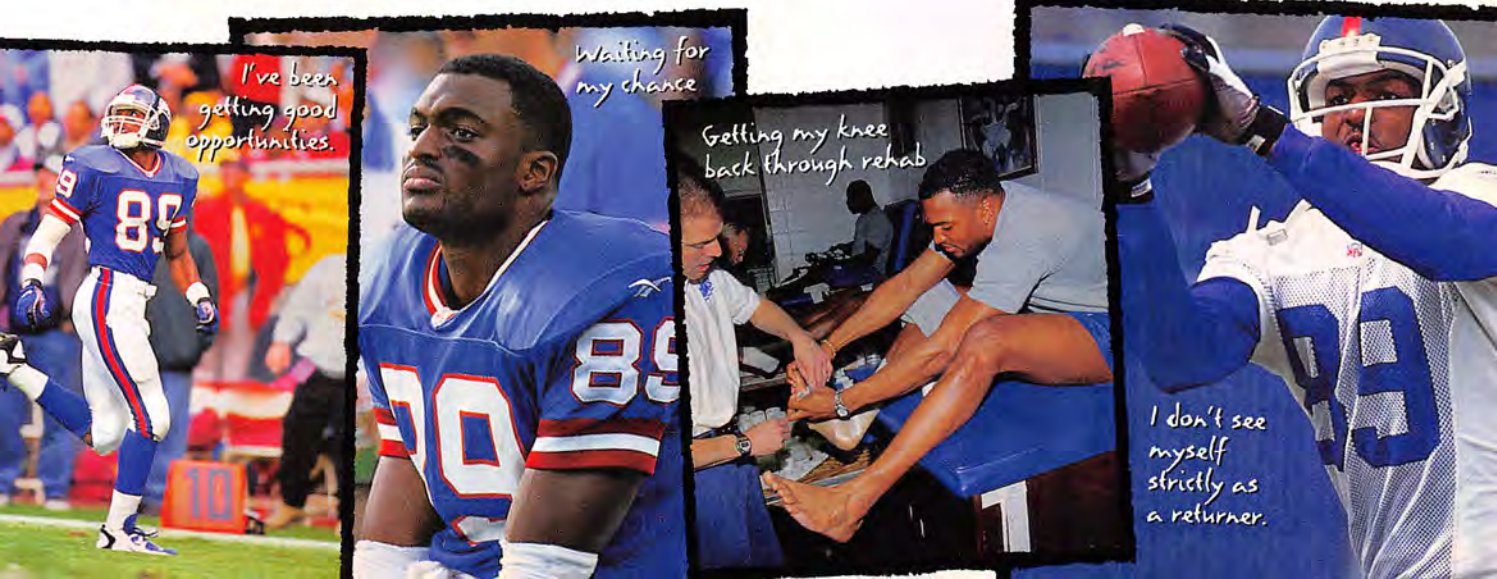
Reeves calls Toomer "an exceptional playmaker." He is pleased with his attitude. "Amani started working out immediately. He's down there every morning. When there's knee surgery, the important thing is how well they rehab."

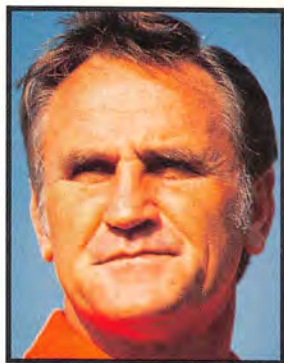
I usually come in about 9:30 or 10, and then ice my knee for about half an hour. After that, I ride the exercise bike before going out for lunch. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, I lift weights for my upper body. On Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, I do leg-strengthening exercises, like squats. I can walk, but it bothers me when I run.

I watch the home games from the locker room because I'm seeing the doctor, but the road games I have to catch on TV. It's not easy. But I should be able to come back 100 percent. I have to work on little things—techniques, consistency—to help me get where I want to be. I'm just waiting so I can get back on the field."

The Giants finished the season 6-10, fired Dan Reeves on December 23, and on January 15, 1997, hired Arizona offensive coordinator Jim Fassel as coach.

Toomer continued his rehabilitation through the winter and expected to be fully recovered and an integral part of the Giants in '97.





Among Hall of Fame coach Don Shula's record 347 victories were the 17 he achieved 25 years ago with the 1972 Miami Dolphins, **the only undefeated team in pro football history.** Shula spoke about that special season with author Jim O'Brien.

BY DON SHULA

The biggest team accomplishment in my 33-year career was definitely the Miami Dolphins' 17-0 season in 1972. Nobody had ever gone undefeated before, and nobody has done it since. We turned around a team that had been 3-10-1 in 1969 to 10-4 the next year, my first season in Miami. We went to the Super Bowl [VI] in 1971, against the Dallas Cowboys, but we walked away from that a loser [24-3]. Then came the '72 season.

Once we got to 12-0, we started to think about the possibility of winning them all. And why not? We had only three close calls the entire season.

We were in a unique position going into Super Bowl VII against the Washington Redskins. We were 16-0, yet the Red-

skins, who were 13-3, were the favorites. That might have had something to do with my record. I'd been to two previous Super Bowls and lost them both, one against the New York Jets [16-7 in Super Bowl III], when I was coaching the Baltimore Colts, and the one against the Cowboys in '71.

So there was a lot of apprehension on my part. The whole season would be a failure if we didn't win the Super Bowl. My former boss in Baltimore, Carroll Rosenbloom, never forgave me for leaving the Colts to coach the Dolphins, and he was telling everyone that I was 0-2 in Super Bowls. If we had lost that game, I'd have been the only coach to go 0-3.

UNFORGETTABLE GAME

That's got to be the biggest game of my coaching career, the one I'll remember the longest. We beat the Redskins 14-7, and I felt such a sense of relief and accomplishment. We scored a touchdown in each of the first two quarters and turned the game over to our so-called No-Name Defense. In the closing minutes, Garo Yepremian set up for a field goal, but the snap and placement got botched, and Garo threw a pass that was intercepted and returned for a touchdown. Who ever thinks something like that will happen?

The thing you learn when you take a team to a Super

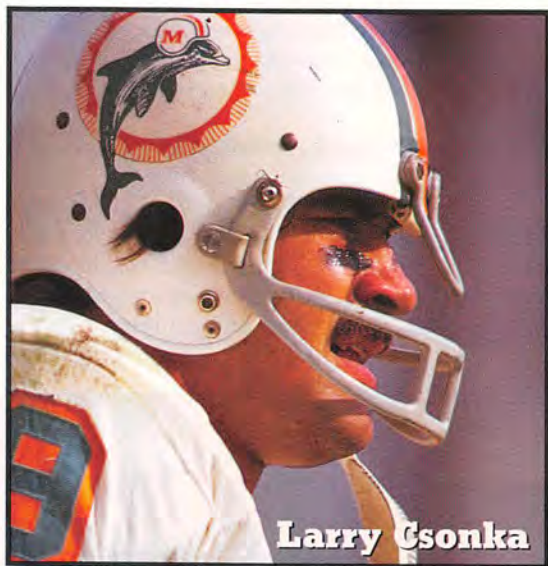
Bowl is that both teams are treated the same the week before the game. After the game, they talk only about one team, and you want to be that team.

Getting to the Super Bowl is one thing, but you still have to win. No matter how confident you might be in your coaching ability, you're still judged by whether you won or lost the big ones. That's why I have always admired Chuck Noll, who had been my assistant in Baltimore. He was 4-0 as a head coach in the Super Bowl.

It's hard to compare my '72 Dolphins with other great teams of the past, but they went into an area where no other team has gone. I was very demanding. I got the players to work hard and to accomplish to the best of their abilities. We had a team with great mental toughness that never made any mistakes on offense or defense. The players understood what we wanted done. They were intelligent, competitive, very unselfish, and determined.

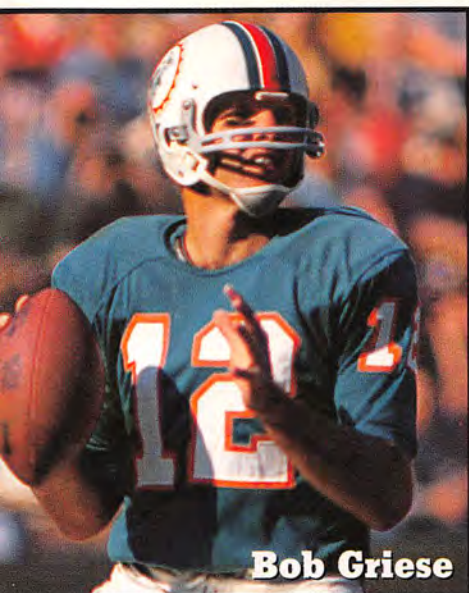
SPECIAL PLAYERS

In Bob Griese, we had a great field general. In Larry Csonka, we had a short-yardage runner who could get us into the end zone. Paul Warfield was a receiver who came up with big plays, and Mercury Morris was a breakaway threat. We had a great front line, anchored by Jim Langer at center and Larry Little at guard. People called us dull, said we were not an exciting football team. A lot of that had to do with Griese and his personality; he was businesslike in his



Larry Csonka

THE YEAR OF



Bob Griese

approach, a low-key operator. But we had flair in Morris and Warfield.

Some guys from that team are in the Hall of Fame—Csonka, Griese, Little, Langer—but not one defensive player. I hope that is corrected someday. Guys like Nick Buoniconti, Jake Scott, and Dick Anderson were quality ballplayers on our defense. Buoniconti was an amazing guy. He weighed about 215 or 220 at best, but he could play football, and he was the leader of our No-Name Defense.

Earl Morrall came through for us in a big way that year, just as he had for me in Baltimore. When Griese went down with an ankle injury in the fifth game, everybody was shaken up. Earl was 38 at the time, but he calmly came in and gave us great leadership. We won the next nine regular-season games and the first round of the playoffs behind him.

TOUGH DECISIONS

One of the most difficult moves I ever had to make was replacing Earl. We were struggling in the second half of the AFC championship game against Pittsburgh. So I put Griese in, and we pulled that game out of the bag.

Then, I had a decision to make: Who should start in the Super Bowl? I went with Griese. Earl, being the unselfish team player that he was, helped make that easier. He was the best, a real class

guy. He did the same thing for me in Baltimore when Unitas was out, helping take us to Super Bowl III.

I've been lucky to have some great quarterbacks. Talk about the two-minute drill: Johnny Unitas invented the two-minute drill! I had Griese and Morrall. Then I had Danny Marino. He's gotta be recognized as the best ever. Dan has all the numbers—he broke every passing record. And he did it in fewer years than [Fran] Tarkenton.

As long as I've been in sports, I always thought people and teams were measured by their accomplishments. When you're a team that's done what we did, you ought to get recognized. And 17-0 was a great accomplishment.

PRESERVING THE RECORD

There's been a strong bonding of that team. Every year, when some team gets off to a strong start, and is undefeated at some point, our guys from '72 start pulling for someone to beat that team. They don't want our record to be equaled.

That really showed in '85 when the Bears came to Miami. They were 12-0 and determined to win them all. It was a Monday night, and all our alumni from the 17-0 team were there. They knew the Bears had a great opportunity to go undefeated.

The game was played with the intensity of a Super Bowl. When you pulled into the parking lot, you could sense the excitement. In the pregame warm-up, everyone was so fired up. That was another one of the great jobs of my coaching career. It was probably the best first half of football I've ever been around. We scored 31 points, and I remember [coach] Mike Ditka and Buddy Ryan, his defensive coordinator, were ready to duke it out at half time. That game gave me a great deal of

pleasure. It was the only one the Bears lost that year.

I'm not sure if a team can go undefeated today. It's different now. The rules have changed. Free agency has changed a lot of things. Player agents are more prominent, and they've gotten in between the coach and the players.

Is there ever going to be a team that goes 17-0 again? If history is any indication, then it's not likely. All of us who've been around a long time know, however, that it can happen. People thought George Halas's record [for career victories] would never be broken, either.

I haven't missed a lot of the things that have crept into the game. But I always felt game day was something special. And in 1972, all the games proved to be extra special.

Jim O'Brien has a new book on the Steelers, Keep The Faith, coming out in September.



Mercury Morris

THE DOLPHIN

MIND

Coaches and players use anything, including psychological ploys, to gain a competitive edge.

by Scott Ostler, *San Francisco Chronicle*
illustrations by Steve Haefele

Weeb Ewbank, who coached the New York Jets of the Joe Namath era, had an expression. It was a bit of a malapropism, but it could be the motto of every player and coach in the NFL, then and now. When Ewbank would argue with a game official, he would make his point and then explain, "All I want is my fair advantage."

Right there, Ewbank distilled the essence of the game. News flash: Pro football is a violent, nasty war fought by desperadoes. Losing is death, winning is life.

Survival comes from gaining an edge. Every player lifts weights, studies film, analyzes computer printouts, eats vitamins. So what's the wild card in the deck, the one area where, all other things being equal, a player or coach can gain his fair advantage?

The head, Fred! If a player can crawl inside his opponent's noggin and steal an ounce of that man's courage or concentration, plant a doubt or two, he's got the edge. Or if a player thinks he's done that to an opponent, even if he hasn't, that player has jacked himself up the notch that separates the butt-kickers from the kickers.

New Jets coach Bill Parcells, who has taken the Giants and the Patriots to the Super Bowl, has earned a reputation as a psychologist on the sidelines.

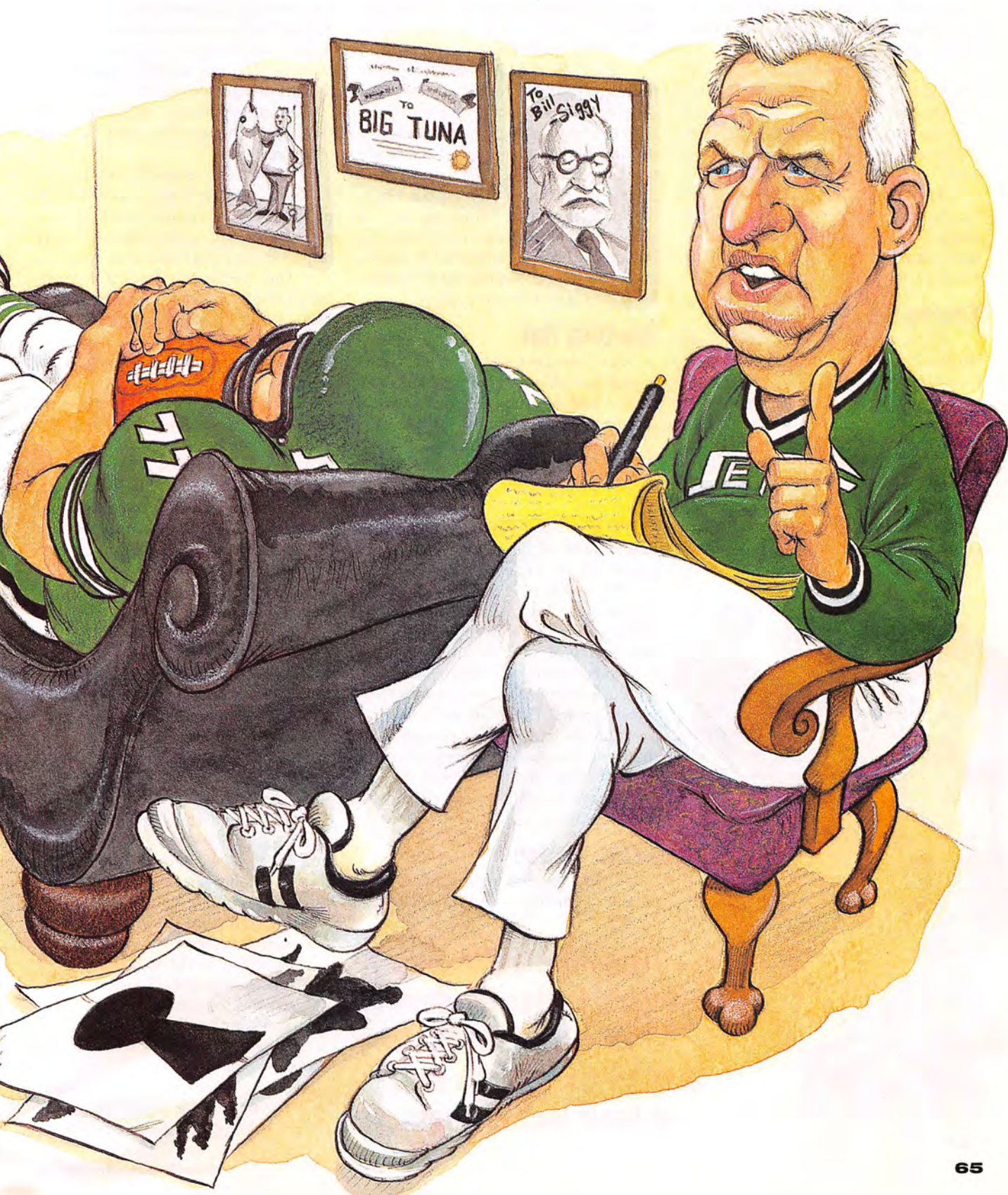
"Nothing Bill says or does is just casually thrown out there," one Patriots insider says. "Everything he says or does has a distinct purpose. He finds a person's hot buttons and he pushes 'em."

Parcells plants messages for his players through the media, a common practice of many coaches. As Dolphins coach Jimmy Johnson once said to a gathering of reporters, "I never talk to you; I talk through you." Everything Johnson says is meant to filter back to his team and have some psychological impact. The same for Parcells. He referred to the injury rehab of

New Jets coach Bill Parcells has earned a reputation as a psychologist on the sidelines.



GAMES



rookie receiver Terry Glenn early last season, saying, "She's coming along fine."

A slip of the tongue? Not a chance. Parcells's message was clear, and whether it inspired Glenn to hurry his return is unknown. The fact is, the rookie did come back soon after and make a huge contribution to the Patriots' Super Bowl run.

A player who absorbs Parcells's subtle digs and lessons, and buys into his psychology, earns the Big Tuna's ultimate praise: "He gets it."

"Coach Parcells plays all kinds of mind games," Willie Clay of the Patriots told *The New York Times*, "but they are all with the purpose of making you a better player and of making the team a better team."

"Head games, that's the deciding factor, the difference between winners and losers," said Jamie Williams, a former tight end for the Oilers, 49ers, and Raiders (1984-94).

Seeing the Light

A famous example: In the '70s, opposing coaches were convinced that Raiders boss Al Davis resorted to devious tactics, even spy devices. Harland Svare, then coach of the Chargers, was so positive that Davis had planted a microphone in the visiting coach's dressing room in Oakland that he shook his fist at a light bulb and screamed, "Damn you, Al Davis!"

That story illustrates not only how silly and ridiculous these mind games

are, but how effective they can be. The Raiders won games and dominated a couple of decades.

John Madden, who coached the Raiders from 1969 through '78, insisted he didn't believe in mind games. But if other coaches and players believed, what the heck, why not go with the flow?

"I learned," Madden said, "that when someone complained about something the Raiders did—accused us of dirty tricks—just take the credit."

"The Oakland Coliseum had lousy drainage, the field was usually wet, and other teams always said we watered the field to make it sloppy. Why would we do that? We had a lot of speed; we didn't want a wet field. But why try to deny it? I'd say to [Kansas City coach] Hank Stram, 'Gee, Hank, I told our guy to water the field for two hours, but he turned the hose on and went to lunch, had a few drinks, left the water running for eight hours. I'm really sorry.'"

You Dirty Rat

One Saturday before the Chiefs were to play in Oakland, Madden happened to walk past the visitors' locker room and saw several men working.

"What are you guys doing?"

"We're exterminators, coach. There are a lot of rats in here; we're going to get rid of 'em."

"Don't do that," Madden said. "Take the afternoon off. I'll see that you get paid for the job. We'll feed the rats."

The next day before the game, Madden dropped by to say hello to Stram, and in a voice loud enough for the Chiefs' players to hear, said, "Hank, there are a lot of rats around here—big ones. We've got the exterminators on it, but nothing seems to work. Those rats are so tough."

Madden later learned that some of the Chiefs dressed for the game standing on stools. Still, Madden insisted, "I don't think that stuff really works. All it does is entertain you."

Scare Tactics

Really? Tell that to the players who devote so much time and energy to get-

ting into their opponents' heads. Jamie Williams, for instance, wore his hair in long, braided dreadlocks.

"That was part of my psych game," said Williams, currently working on his Ph.D. "If I could get my opponent believing I was a little bit off my rocker, that I was a loose cannon, it would be harder for him to think about his job. I played for the straight-arrow 49ers, for a coach [George Seifert] who wanted everyone to be the same, so my opponents had to be thinking, This guy must be something if they let him get away with that hair."

During warm-ups, Williams would take off his helmet and strut past the opposing team.

"Junior Seau is good at that, too," Williams said. "He'd walk away from his team during warm-ups, walk by our offensive linemen, saying, in effect, 'I don't respect the fact that this is your area.'"

"The '86 Bears—[Jim] McMahon, [Mike] Singletary, [Otis] Wilson, [Richard] Dent, [Wilber] Marshall—those guys wouldn't even warm up with their team. They'd stand at the 50-yard line and glare at us."

Williams remembered his first game against the then-feared Raiders. "I'm lined up against Lyle Alzado, and he looks directly at me and starts growling. Not like he's joking, but like there's really something seriously wrong with him. I'm thinking, No, God, tell me this ain't real. Alzado forced a decision on me. Am I gonna face fear, or will I hesitate? I believe I closed my eyes, at first, and took that step in the darkness."

Painful Lesson

Mention intimidation, and the name Lawrence Taylor invariably pops up.

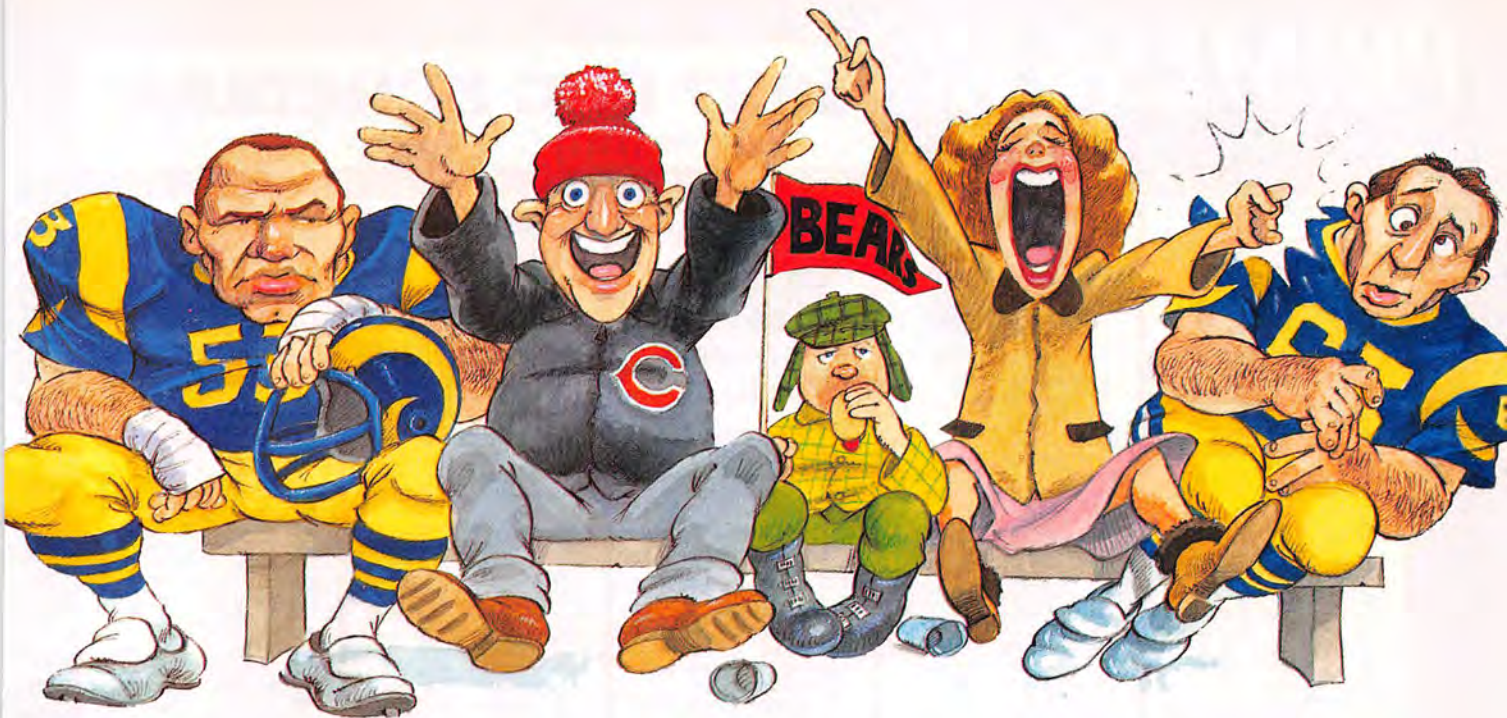
"L.T. was a master," Williams said. "When he decided he wanted to make you look bad, he could do that. He was not a big-time talker, but his body language and demeanor were profound. He's dark-complected, but he has bright eyes, so he'd look at you and all you would see were his eyes. You'd come out of the huddle and he'd be looking at you like, 'I'm gonna rip you to shreds.' He could look right through you. I saw guys who were defeated by that look. They were like a deer in the headlights."

"When I was with Houston, one of our guys did something wrong to L.T., and he said, not loud, 'That just cost your quarterback some pain.' Next play, he sacked Warren Moon. Hard."

If you're going to be an intimidator, though, you'd better bring your best stuff. Russ Bolinger, a guard who played



The Chiefs dressed nervously after Raiders coach John Madden apologized for the rats in their locker room.



nine years in the NFL for the Lions and Rams, and now scouts for the Lions, was known as an eccentric and a talker.

"In '82, the first game after the strike, we played the Bears," Bolinger recalled. "Jim McMahon was a rookie, and Ditka starts him. I thought, If I get a chance, I'll try to intimidate this kid.

"McMahon already had a rep of being a big whiner and complainer, so he throws an interception and starts crying to the official about pass interference. He stays on the field to argue, he's got his helmet off, and I tell my guys, 'Watch this.'

"I walk over and get in his face, start screaming, 'Hey, get off the field, you @#%&* Mormon #\$\$%&*@.'

"McMahon turns and screams back in my face, 'Hey, you stupid *%\$#@, I'm not a @#%&* Mormon, I'm a &*%\$#@ Catholic, so @%\$# you!'

"I said to myself, 'Bleep, this guy's gonna be good.' "

As Bolinger learned, tough talk works best if you can back it up.

Water Break

"Howie Long, he was a legitimate badass," Bolinger said. "One time against Seattle, the Seahawks were holding and cutting Howie. There was a time-out, the water boy was about to give the Seattle players their water, and Howie walked right into their group. He had his helmet off, and he said, 'Put that water down—you don't deserve it. If you keep this crap up, after the game I'm going to beat you up in the parking lot, in front of your families.' And while Howie was talking, he was drinking their water. Nobody

said a word to him."

The great players seem to be the best psychologists, and maybe there's a connection.

"Jerry Rice is a master at head games," Williams said. "You'd see him get tackled, they'd just knock the dogstuff out of him, and he'd jump up like it was a routine hit. Then he'd whisper to me in the huddle, 'God, they almost killed me, Jamie. I almost had to come out.' Jerry's got a lot of pride, but that's more than pride; it's making the other team believe you're invulnerable.

"Quarterbacks work on your head, too. Joe Montana was a master. You can tell the great quarterbacks by the way they walk up to the line. Like they're gunslingers. If the defense sees weak eyes in the quarterback, it's like smelling blood.

"Joe would walk up to the line smiling. If a linebacker was three feet out of position, and that meant blitz, Joe would look directly in that linebacker's eyes and start calling an audible, like he just busted the guy."

Dan Marino, John Elway, and Steve Young are three quarterbacks who have mastered the "That's right, we're bad" saunter to the line of scrimmage. But Daryle Lamonica may have been the king of bad. When he was the Raiders' mad bomber, Lamonica would walk from the huddle windmilling his right arm.

The Bear Necessities

Coaches, all of whom are head cases, work the angles, trying to inspire their own players and intimidate opponents. For legendary Bears coach George Halas,

Bears owner George Halas once actually sold tickets to fans on the Rams' bench.

no trick was too petty. He would make sure that the visitors' locker room in Chicago had 10 clean towels for the whole team. One game against the Rams, Halas actually sold tickets to fans on the Rams' bench.

The big question on gamesmanship is, Does it work?

"It does if you win," Madden said. "Gamesmanship is like leadership. A guy's a good leader if he's playing well. If he's not playing well, all he is is a guy who talks too goddamn much. If you win, you can go backward with your logic: 'We won because we wore black uniforms and acted tough.' "

Still, Madden figured if opposing coaches wanted to worry about Raiders plots, who was he to stand in their way?

"[Former Houston Oilers coach] Bum Phillips was convinced we pumped helium into balls for our punter, Ray Guy," Madden said. "I told Bum, 'Yeah, we do that. But [center Dave] Dalby can't snap a helium ball because it would just float like a blimp, so he hikes a regular ball and Guy switches it for a helium ball.' "

And while Bum was busy mulling over that one, the Raiders were winning the football game. ■

1997 NFC SCHEDULE

Eastern Standard Times (1996 Score) *Overtime Game

N F C E A S T



ARIZONA CARDINALS

8/2	at Seattle	10:00
8/8	at St. Louis	8:00
8/16	at Chicago	8:00
8/22	OAKLAND	9:00
8/31	at Cincinnati	1:00
9/7	DALLAS	8:00 (6-10)
9/14	at Washington	1:00 (37-34)*
9/21	Bye	
9/28	at Tampa Bay	1:00 (13-9)
10/5	MINNESOTA	4:00 (17-41)
10/12	N.Y. GIANTS	4:00 (31-23)
10/19	at Philadelphia	1:00 (19-29)
10/26	HOUSTON	4:00
11/2	PHILADELPHIA	4:00 (36-30)
11/9	at Dallas	1:00 (3-17)
11/16	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 (8-16)
11/23	at Baltimore	1:00
11/30	PITTSBURGH	4:00
12/7	WASHINGTON	4:00 (27-26)
12/14	at New Orleans	4:00 (28-14)
12/21	ATLANTA	4:00



DALLAS COWBOYS

8/3	OAKLAND	8:00
8/8	at New England	8:00
8/15	ST. LOUIS	8:00
8/22	HOUSTON	8:00
8/31	at Pittsburgh	1:00
9/7	at Arizona	8:00 (10-6)
9/15	PHILADELPHIA	9:00 (21-31)
9/21	Bye	
9/28	CHICAGO	4:00 (6-22)
10/5	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 (6-20)
10/13	at Washington	9:00 (10-37)
10/19	JACKSONVILLE	1:00
10/26	at Philadelphia	1:00 (23-19)
11/2	at San Francisco	4:00 (20-17)*
11/9	ARIZONA	1:00 (17-3)
11/16	WASHINGTON	1:00 (21-10)
11/23	at Green Bay	1:00 (21-6)
11/27	HOUSTON	4:00
12/8	CAROLINA	9:00
12/14	at Cincinnati	1:00
12/21	N.Y. GIANTS	1:00 (27-0)



NEW YORK GIANTS

8/2	at Baltimore	8:00
8/9	JACKSONVILLE	8:00
8/16	N.Y. JETS	8:00
8/22	v. G.B. (Madison)	8:00
8/31	PHILADELPHIA	1:00 (10-19)
9/7	at Jacksonville	4:00
9/14	BALTIMORE	1:00
9/21	at St. Louis	4:00
9/28	NEW ORLEANS	1:00 (3-17)
10/5	DALLAS	1:00 (20-6)
10/12	at Arizona	4:00 (23-31)
10/19	at Detroit	4:00 (35-7)
10/26	CINCINNATI	1:00
11/2	Bye	
11/9	at Houston	4:00
11/16	ARIZONA	1:00 (16-8)
11/23	at Washington	8:00 (21-31)
11/30	TAMPA BAY	4:00
12/7	at Philadelphia	1:00 (0-24)
12/13	WASHINGTON	12:30 (10-31)
12/21	at Dallas	1:00 (0-27)



PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

8/2	at N.Y. Jets	8:00
8/11	at Pittsburgh	8:00
8/16	BALTIMORE	8:00
8/21	NEW ENGLAND	8:00
8/31	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 (19-10)
9/7	GREEN BAY	4:00 (13-39)
9/15	at Dallas	9:00 (31-21)
9/21	Bye	
9/28	at Minnesota	8:00
10/5	WASHINGTON	1:00 (21-26)
10/12	at Jacksonville	1:00
10/19	ARIZONA	1:00 (29-19)
10/26	DALLAS	1:00 (19-23)
11/2	at Arizona	4:00 (30-36)
11/10	SAN FRANCISCO	9:00
11/16	at Baltimore	1:00
11/23	PITTSBURGH	1:00
11/30	CINCINNATI	1:00
12/7	N.Y. GIANTS	1:00 (24-0)
12/14	at Atlanta	1:00 (33-18)
12/21	at Washington	1:00 (17-14)



WASHINGTON REDSKINS

8/2	v. T.B. (Orlando)	7:30
8/9	v. Hou. (Nash.)	7:00
8/16	at Atlanta	7:30
8/21	at Miami	8:00
8/31	at Carolina	8:00
9/7	at Pittsburgh	1:00
9/14	ARIZONA	1:00 (34-37)*
9/21	Bye	
9/28	JACKSONVILLE	1:00
10/5	at Philadelphia	1:00 (26-21)
10/13	DALLAS	9:00 (37-10)
10/19	at Houston	1:00
10/26	BALTIMORE	1:00
11/2	at Chicago	1:00 (10-3)
11/9	DETROIT	1:00
11/16	at Dallas	1:00 (10-21)
11/23	N.Y. GIANTS	8:00 (31-21)
11/30	ST. LOUIS	1:00 (17-10)
12/7	at Arizona	4:00 (26-27)
12/13	at N.Y. Giants	12:30 (31-10)
12/21	PHILADELPHIA	1:00 (14-17)

N F C C E N T R A L



CHICAGO BEARS

7/27	v. Pitt. (Dublin)	1:00
8/2	at Buffalo	7:00
8/10	at Miami	8:00
8/16	ARIZONA	8:00
8/22	NEW ORLEANS	7:30
9/1	at Green Bay	9:00 (17-28)
9/7	MINNESOTA	1:00 (14-20)
9/14	DETROIT	1:00 (31-14)
9/21	at New England	1:00
9/28	at Dallas	4:00 (22-6)
10/5	NEW ORLEANS	8:00 (24-27)
10/12	GREEN BAY	1:00 (6-37)
10/19	Bye	
10/26	at Miami	4:00
11/2	WASHINGTON	1:00 (3-10)
11/9	at Minnesota	1:00 (15-13)
11/16	N.Y. JETS	4:00
11/23	TAMPA BAY	1:00 (13-10)
11/27	at Detroit	12:30 (16-35)
12/7	BUFFALO	1:00
12/14	at St. Louis	8:00 (35-9)
12/21	at Tampa Bay	1:00 (19-34)



DETROIT LIONS

8/1	ATLANTA	8:30
8/8	CINCINNATI	8:30
8/17	at Pittsburgh	8:00
8/21	at Indianapolis	7:30
8/31	ATLANTA	1:00 (28-24)
9/7	TAMPA BAY	1:00 (21-6)
9/14	at Chicago	1:00 (14-31)
9/21	at New Orleans	1:00
9/28	GREEN BAY	1:00 (3-31)
10/5	at Buffalo	1:00
10/12	at Tampa Bay	1:00 (27-0)
10/19	N.Y. GIANTS	4:00 (7-35)
10/26	Bye	
11/2	at Green Bay	8:00 (18-28)
11/9	at Washington	1:00
11/16	MINNESOTA	1:00 (22-24)
11/23	INDIANAPOLIS	1:00
11/27	CHICAGO	12:30 (35-16)
12/7	at Miami	8:00
12/14	at Minnesota	1:00 (13-17)
12/21	N.Y. JETS	4:00



GREEN BAY PACKERS

7/26	MIAMI	6:30
7/31	NEW ENGLAND	8:00
8/8	at Oakland	TBA
8/16	v. Buff. (Toronto)	4:00
8/22	v. NYG. (Madison)	8:00
9/1	CHICAGO	9:00 (28-17)
9/7	at Philadelphia	4:00 (39-13)
9/14	MIAMI	1:00
9/21	MINNESOTA	1:00 (38-10)
9/28	at Detroit	1:00 (31-3)
10/5	TAMPA BAY	1:00 (13-7)
10/12	at Chicago	1:00 (37-6)
10/19	Bye	
10/27	at New England	9:00
11/2	DETROIT	8:00 (28-18)
11/9	ST. LOUIS	1:00 (24-9)
11/16	at Indianapolis	1:00
11/23	DALLAS	1:00 (6-21)
12/1	at Minnesota	9:00 (21-30)
12/7	at Tampa Bay	1:00 (34-3)
12/14	at Carolina	4:00
12/20	BUFFALO	12:30



MINNESOTA VIKINGS

7/26	v. Sea. (Canton)	5:30
8/2	ST. LOUIS	8:00
8/8	at Buffalo	7:30
8/16	at Cincinnati	8:30
8/22	SAN DIEGO	8:00
8/31	at Buffalo	1:00
9/7	at Chicago	1:00 (20-14)
9/14	TAMPA BAY	1:00 (21-10)
9/21	at Green Bay	1:00 (10-38)
9/28	PHILADELPHIA	8:00
10/5	at Arizona	4:00 (41-17)
10/12	CAROLINA	4:00 (14-12)
10/19	Bye	
10/26	at Tampa Bay	1:00 (13-24)
11/2	NEW ENGLAND	1:00
11/9	CHICAGO	1:00 (13-15)
11/16	at Detroit	1:00 (24-22)
11/23	at N.Y. Jets	1:00
12/1	GREEN BAY	9:00 (30-21)
12/7	at San Francisco	4:00
12/14	DETROIT	1:00 (17-13)
12/21	INDIANAPOLIS	1:00



TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

8/2	v. Was. (Orlando)	7:30
8/9	at Atlanta	7:30
8/16	MIAMI	7:30
8/22	v. NYJ. (Orlando)	7:30
8/31	SAN FRANCISCO	4:00
9/7	at Detroit	1:00 (6-21)
9/14	at Minnesota	1:00 (10-21)
9/21	MIAMI	8:00
9/28	ARIZONA	1:00 (9-13)
10/5	at Green Bay	1:00 (7-13)
10/12	DETROIT	1:00 (0-27)
10/19	Bye	
10/26	MINNESOTA	1:00 (24-13)
11/2	at Indianapolis	1:00
11/9	at Atlanta	1:00
11/16	NEW ENGLAND	1:00
11/23	at Chicago	1:00 (10-13)
11/30	at N.Y. Giants	4:00
12/7	GREEN BAY	1:00 (3-34)
12/14	at N.Y. Jets	1:00
12/21	CHICAGO	1:00 (34-19)

N F C W E S T



ATLANTA FALCONS

8/1	at Detroit	8:30
8/9	TAMPA BAY	7:30
8/16	WASHINGTON	7:30
8/22	at Jacksonville	7:30
8/31	at Detroit	1:00 (24-28)
9/7	CAROLINA	1:00 (20-17)
9/14	OAKLAND	1:00
9/21	at San Francisco	4:00 (17-39)
9/28	DENVER	1:00
10/5	Bye	
10/12	at New Orleans	1:00 (31-15)
10/19	SAN FRANCISCO	1:00 (10-34)
10/26	at Carolina	8:00 (6-29)
11/2	ST. LOUIS	1:00 (27-34)
11/9	TAMPA BAY	1:00
11/16	at St. Louis	1:00 (16-59)
11/23	NEW ORLEANS	1:00 (17-15)
11/30	at Seattle	4:00
12/7	at San Diego	4:00
12/14	PHILADELPHIA	1:00 (18-33)
12/21	at Arizona	4:00



CAROLINA PANTHERS

8/3	at Jacksonville	3:00
8/9	DENVER	8:00
8/14	at Kansas City	8:00
8/22	PITTSBURGH	8:00
8/31	WASHINGTON	8:00
9/7	at Atlanta	1:00 (17-20)
9/14	at San Diego	4:00
9/21	KANSAS CITY	1:00
9/29	SAN FRANCISCO	9:00 (23-7)
10/5	Bye	
10/12	at Minnesota	4:00 (12-14)
10/19	at New Orleans	1:00 (22-20)
10/26	ATLANTA	8:00 (29-6)
11/2	OAKLAND	1:00
11/9	at Denver	4:00
11/16	at San Francisco	4:00 (30-24)
11/23	at St. Louis	4:00 (20-10)
11/30	NEW ORLEANS	1:00 (19-7)
12/8	at Dallas	9:00
12/14	GREEN BAY	4:00
12/20	ST. LOUIS	4:00 (45-13)



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

8/2	v. Hou. (Memph.)	7:00
8/9	KANSAS CITY	8:00
8/16	at Oakland	4:00
8/22	at Chicago	7:30
8/31	at St. Louis	1:00 (13-14)
9/7	SAN DIEGO	1:00
9/14	at San Francisco	4:00 (11-27)
9/21	DETROIT	1:00
9/28	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 (17-3)
10/5	at Chicago	8:00 (27-24)
10/12	ATLANTA	1:00 (15-31)
10/19	CAROLINA	1:00 (20-22)
10/26	SAN FRANCISCO	1:00 (17-24)
11/2	Bye	
11/9	at Oakland	4:00
11/16	SEATTLE	1:00
11/23	at Atlanta	1:00 (15-17)
11/30	at Carolina	1:00 (7-19)
12/7	ST. LOUIS	1:00 (10-26)
12/14	ARIZONA	4:00 (14-28)
12/21	at Kansas City	1:00



ST. LOUIS RAMS

8/2	at Minnesota	8:00
8/8	ARIZONA	8:00
8/15	at Dallas	8:00
8/21	KANSAS CITY	8:00
8/31	NEW ORLEANS	1:00 (14-13)
9/7	SAN FRANCISCO	1:00 (11-28)
9/14	at Denver	4:00
9/21	N.Y. GIANTS	4:00
9/28	at Oakland	4:00
10/5	Bye	
10/12	at San Francisco	4:00 (0-34)
10/19	SEATTLE	1:00
10/26	KANSAS CITY	1:00
11/2	at Atlanta	1:00 (34-27)
11/9	at Green Bay	1:00 (9-24)
11/16	ATLANTA	1:00 (59-16)
11/23	CAROLINA	4:00 (10-20)
11/30	at Washington	1:00 (10-17)
12/7	at New Orleans	1:00 (26-10)
12/14	CHICAGO	8:00 (9-35)
12/20	at Carolina	4:00 (13-45)



SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

8/2	at San Diego	10:00
8/9	SEATTLE	9:00
8/16	JACKSONVILLE	8:00
8/23	at Denver	8:00
8/31	at Tampa Bay	4:00
9/7	at St. Louis	1:00 (28-11)
9/14	NEW ORLEANS	4:00 (27-11

1997 AFC SCHEDULE

Eastern Standard Times (1996 Score) *Overtime Game

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A F C E A S T



BUFFALO BILLS

7/26	at Denver	8:00
8/2	CHICAGO	7:00
8/8	MINNESOTA	7:30
8/16	v. G.B. (Toronto)	4:00
8/22	at Baltimore	7:30
8/31	MINNESOTA	1:00
9/7	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 (25-22)
9/14	at Kansas City	1:00 (20-9)
9/21	INDIANAPOLIS	4:00 (16-13)*
9/28	Bye	
10/5	DETROIT	1:00
10/12	at New England	1:00 (25-28)
10/20	at Indianapolis	9:00 (10-13)*
10/26	DENVER	1:00
11/2	MIAMI	1:00 (7-21)
11/9	NEW ENGLAND	4:00 (17-10)
11/17	at Miami	9:00 (14-16)
11/23	at Houston	1:00
11/30	N.Y. JETS	1:00 (35-10)
12/7	at Chicago	1:00
12/14	JACKSONVILLE	1:00
12/20	at Green Bay	12:30



INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

8/1	CINCINNATI	7:30
8/9	at San Diego	10:00
8/16	at Seattle	10:00
8/21	DETROIT	7:30
8/31	at Miami	1:00 (13-37)
9/7	NEW ENGLAND	1:00 (9-27)
9/14	SEATTLE	4:00
9/21	at Buffalo	4:00 (13-6)*
9/28	Bye	
10/5	N.Y. JETS	4:00 (34-29)
10/12	at Pittsburgh	8:00
10/20	BUFFALO	9:00 (13-10)*
10/26	at San Diego	4:00 (19-26)
11/2	TAMPA BAY	1:00
11/9	CINCINNATI	1:00 (24-31)
11/16	GREEN BAY	1:00
11/23	at Detroit	1:00
11/30	at New England	1:00 (13-27)
12/7	at N.Y. Jets	4:00 (21-7)
12/14	MIAMI	1:00 (10-6)
12/21	at Minnesota	1:00



MIAMI DOLPHINS

7/26	at Green Bay	6:30
8/4	v. Den. (Guadal.)	8:00
8/10	CHICAGO	8:00
8/16	at Tampa Bay	7:30
8/21	WASHINGTON	8:00
8/31	INDIANAPOLIS	1:00 (37-13)
9/7	HOUSTON	1:00
9/14	at Green Bay	1:00
9/21	at Tampa Bay	8:00
9/28	Bye	
10/5	KANSAS CITY	1:00
10/12	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 (31-28)
10/19	at Baltimore	4:00
10/26	CHICAGO	4:00
11/2	at Buffalo	1:00 (21-7)
11/9	N.Y. JETS	1:00 (36-27)
11/17	BUFFALO	9:00 (16-14)
11/23	at New England	1:00 (23-42)
11/30	at Oakland	4:00 (7-17)
12/7	DETROIT	8:00
12/14	at Indianapolis	1:00 (6-10)
12/22	NEW ENGLAND	9:00 (24-10)



NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

7/31	at Green Bay	8:00
8/8	DALLAS	8:00
8/17	DENVER	1:00
8/21	at Philadelphia	8:00
8/31	SAN DIEGO	1:00 (45-7)
9/7	at Indianapolis	1:00 (27-9)
9/14	N.Y. JETS	8:00 (34-10)
9/21	CHICAGO	1:00
9/28	Bye	
10/6	at Denver	9:00
10/12	BUFFALO	1:00 (28-25)
10/19	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 (31-27)
10/27	GREEN BAY	9:00
11/2	at Minnesota	1:00
11/9	at Buffalo	4:00 (10-17)
11/16	at Tampa Bay	1:00
11/23	MIAMI	1:00 (42-23)
11/30	INDIANAPOLIS	1:00 (27-13)
12/7	at Jacksonville	1:00 (28-25)*
12/13	PITTSBURGH	4:00
12/22	at Miami	9:00 (10-24)



NEW YORK JETS

8/2	PHILADELPHIA	8:00
8/8	BALTIMORE	8:00
8/16	at N.Y. Giants	8:00
8/22	v. T.B. (Orlando)	7:30
8/31	at Seattle	4:00
9/7	BUFFALO	1:00 (22-25)
9/14	at New England	8:00 (10-34)
9/21	OAKLAND	1:00 (13-34)
9/28	at Cincinnati	4:00
10/5	at Indianapolis	4:00 (29-34)
10/12	MIAMI	1:00 (28-31)
10/19	NEW ENGLAND	1:00 (27-31)
10/26	Bye	
11/2	BALTIMORE	1:00
11/9	at Miami	1:00 (27-36)
11/16	at Chicago	4:00
11/23	MINNESOTA	1:00
11/30	at Buffalo	1:00 (10-35)
12/7	INDIANAPOLIS	4:00 (7-21)
12/14	TAMPA BAY	1:00
12/21	at Detroit	4:00

A F C C E N T R A L



BALTIMORE RAVENS

8/2	N.Y. GIANTS	8:00
8/8	at N.Y. Jets	8:00
8/16	at Philadelphia	8:00
8/22	BUFFALO	7:30
8/31	JACKSONVILLE	4:00 (25-28)*
9/7	CINCINNATI	1:00 (21-24)
9/14	at N.Y. Giants	1:00
9/21	at Houston	1:00 (13-29)
9/28	at San Diego	4:00
10/5	PITTSBURGH	1:00 (31-17)
10/12	Bye	
10/19	MIAMI	4:00
10/26	at Washington	1:00
11/2	at N.Y. Jets	1:00
11/9	at Pittsburgh	8:00 (17-31)
11/16	PHILADELPHIA	1:00
11/23	ARIZONA	1:00
11/30	at Jacksonville	1:00 (27-30)
12/7	SEATTLE	1:00
12/14	HOUSTON	1:00 (21-24)
12/21	at Cincinnati	1:00 (14-21)



CINCINNATI BENGALS

8/1	at Indianapolis	7:30
8/8	at Detroit	8:30
8/16	MINNESOTA	8:30
8/22	SEATTLE	8:30
8/31	ARIZONA	1:00
9/7	at Baltimore	1:00 (24-21)
9/14	Bye	
9/21	at Denver	4:00 (10-14)
9/28	N.Y. JETS	4:00
10/5	at Jacksonville	1:00 (27-30)
10/12	at Houston	1:00 (21-13)
10/19	PITTSBURGH	4:00 (34-24)
10/26	at N.Y. Giants	1:00
11/2	SAN DIEGO	1:00 (14-27)
11/9	at Indianapolis	1:00 (31-24)
11/16	at Pittsburgh	1:00 (10-20)
11/23	JACKSONVILLE	4:00 (28-21)
11/30	at Philadelphia	1:00
12/4	HOUSTON	8:00 (27-30)*
12/14	DALLAS	1:00
12/21	BALTIMORE	1:00 (21-24)



HOUSTON OILERS

8/2	v. N.O. (Memph.)	7:00
8/9	v. Was. (Nash.)	7:00
8/16	v. S.D. (Nash.)	10:00
8/22	at Dallas	8:00
8/31	OAKLAND	1:00
9/7	at Miami	1:00 (20-23)
9/14	Bye	
9/21	BALTIMORE	1:00 (29-13)
9/28	at Pittsburgh	1:00 (16-30)
10/5	at Seattle	4:00 (16-23)
10/12	CINCINNATI	1:00 (13-21)
10/19	WASHINGTON	1:00
10/26	at Arizona	4:00
11/2	JACKSONVILLE	4:00 (17-23)
11/9	N.Y. GIANTS	4:00
11/16	at Jacksonville	1:00 (34-27)
11/23	BUFFALO	1:00
11/27	at Dallas	4:00
12/4	at Cincinnati	8:00 (30-27)*
12/14	at Baltimore	1:00 (24-21)
12/21	PITTSBURGH	1:00 (23-13)



JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

8/3	CAROLINA	3:00
8/9	at N.Y. Giants	8:00
8/18	at San Francisco	8:00
8/22	ATLANTA	7:30
8/31	at Baltimore	4:00 (28-25)*
9/7	N.Y. GIANTS	4:00
9/14	Bye	
9/22	PITTSBURGH	9:00 (24-9)
9/28	at Washington	1:00
10/5	CINCINNATI	1:00 (30-27)
10/12	PHILADELPHIA	1:00
10/19	at Dallas	1:00
10/26	at Pittsburgh	4:00 (3-28)
11/2	at Houston	4:00 (23-17)
11/9	KANSAS CITY	1:00
11/16	HOUSTON	1:00 (27-34)
11/23	at Cincinnati	4:00 (21-28)
11/30	BALTIMORE	1:00 (30-27)
12/7	NEW ENGLAND	1:00 (25-28)*
12/14	at Buffalo	1:00
12/21	at Oakland	4:00 (3-17)



PITTSBURGH STEELERS

7/27	v. Chi. (Dublin)	1:00
8/2	at Kansas City	8:00
8/11	PHILADELPHIA	8:00
8/17	DETROIT	8:00
8/22	at Carolina	8:00
8/31	DALLAS	1:00
9/7	WASHINGTON	1:00
9/14	Bye	
9/22	at Jacksonville	9:00 (9-24)
9/28	HOUSTON	1:00 (30-16)
10/5	at Baltimore	1:00 (17-31)
10/12	INDIANAPOLIS	8:00
10/19	at Cincinnati	4:00 (24-34)
10/26	JACKSONVILLE	4:00 (28-3)
11/3	at Kansas City	9:00 (17-7)
11/9	BALTIMORE	8:00 (31-17)
11/16	CINCINNATI	1:00 (20-10)
11/23	at Philadelphia	1:00
11/30	at Arizona	4:00
12/7	DENVER	1:00
12/13	at New England	4:00
12/21	at Houston	1:00 (13-23)

A F C W E S T



DENVER BRONCOS

7/26	BUFFALO	8:00
8/4	v. Mia. (Guadal.)	8:00
8/9	at Carolina	8:00
8/17	at New England	1:00
8/23	SAN FRANCISCO	8:00
8/31	KANSAS CITY	4:00 (34-7)
9/7	at Seattle	4:00 (30-20)
9/14	ST. LOUIS	4:00
9/21	CINCINNATI	4:00 (14-10)
9/28	at Atlanta	1:00
10/6	NEW ENGLAND	9:00
10/12	Bye	
10/19	at Oakland	4:00 (22-21)
10/26	at Buffalo	1:00
11/2	SEATTLE	4:00 (34-7)
11/9	CAROLINA	4:00
11/16	at Kansas City	1:00 (14-17)
11/24	OAKLAND	9:00 (24-19)
11/30	at San Diego	8:00 (10-16)
12/7	at Pittsburgh	1:00
12/15	at San Francisco	9:00
12/21	SAN DIEGO	4:00 (28-17)



KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

8/2	PITTSBURGH	8:00
8/9	at New Orleans	8:00
8/14	CAROLINA	8:00
8/21	at St. Louis	8:00
8/31	at Denver	4:00 (7-34)
9/8	at Oakland	9:00 (7-26)
9/14	BUFFALO	1:00 (9-20)
9/21	at Carolina	1:00
9/28	SEATTLE	4:00 (34-16)
10/5	at Miami	1:00
10/12	Bye	
10/16	SAN DIEGO	8:00 (14-28)
10/26	at St. Louis	1:00
11/3	PITTSBURGH	9:00 (7-17)
11/9	at Jacksonville	1:00
11/16	DENVER	1:00 (17-14)
11/23	at Seattle	4:00 (35-17)
11/30	SAN FRANCISCO	1:00
12/7	OAKLAND	1:00 (19-3)
12/14	at San Diego	4:00 (19-22)
12/21	NEW ORLEANS	1:00



OAKLAND RAIDERS

8/3	at Dallas	8:00
8/8	GREEN BAY	TBA
8/16	NEW ORLEANS	4:00
8/22	at Arizona	9:00
8/31	at Houston	1:00
9/8	KANSAS CITY	9:00 (26-7)
9/14	at Atlanta	1:00
9/21	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 (34-13)
9/28	ST. LOUIS	4:00
10/5	SAN DIEGO	4:00 (34-40)
10/12	Bye	
10/19	DENVER	4:00 (21-22)
10/26	at Seattle	4:00 (27-21)
11/2	at Carolina	1:00
11/9	NEW ORLEANS	4:00
11/16	at San Diego	8:00 (23-14)
11/24	at Denver	9:00 (19-24)
11/30	MIAMI	4:00 (17-7)
12/7	at Kansas City	1:00 (31-19)
12/14	SEATTLE	4:00 (21-28)
12/21	JACKSONVILLE	4:00 (17-3)



SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

8/2	SAN FRAN.	10:00
8/9	INDIANAPOLIS	10:00
8/16	v. Hou. (Nash.)	10:00
8/22	at Minnesota	8:00
8/31	at New England	1:00 (7-45)
9/7	at New Orleans	1:00
9/14	CAROLINA	4:00
9/21	at Seattle	4:00 (13-32)
9/28	BALTIMORE	4:00
10/5	at Oakland	4:00 (40-34)
10/12	Bye	
10/16	at Kansas City	8:00 (28-14)
10/26	INDIANAPOLIS	4:00 (26-19)
11/2	at Cincinnati	1:00 (27-14)
11/9	SEATTLE	4:00 (29-7)
11/16	OAKLAND	8:00 (14-23)
11/23	at San Francisco	4:00
11/30	DENVER	8:00 (16-10)
12/7	ATLANTA	4:00
12/14	KANSAS CITY	4:00 (22-19)
12/21	at Denver	4:00 (17-28)



SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

7/26	v. Minn (Canton)	5:30	
8/2	ARIZONA	10:00	
8/9	at San Fran.	9:00	
8/16	INDIANAPOLIS	10:00	
8/22	at Cincinnati	8:30	
<hr/>			
8/31	N.Y. JETS	4:00	
9/7	DENVER	4:00	(20-30)
9/14	at Indianapolis	4:00	
9/21	SAN DIEGO	4:00	(32-13)
9/28	at Kansas City	4:00	(16-34)
10/5	HOUSTON	4:00	(23-16)
10/12	Bye		
10/19	at St. Louis	1:00	
10/26	OAKLAND	4:00	(21-27)
11/2	at Denver	4:00	(7-34)
11/9	at San Diego	4:00	(7-29)
11/16	at New Orleans	1:00	
11/23	KANSAS CITY	4:00	(17-35)
11/30	ATLANTA	4:00	
12/7	at Baltimore	1:00	
12/14	at Oakland	4:00	(28-21)
12/21	SAN FRANCISCO	8:00	

Even after scoring less than the Eagles, Redskins, and Cardinals, the Cowboys came out on top.

by Don Pierson *Chicago Tribune*

Predicted order of finish



Everything caved in on Dallas last year except the NFC East. Even after scoring fewer points than Philadelphia, Washington, and Arizona, and only a few more than New York, the Cowboys finished ahead of all of them. The trouble is, the Cowboys' leading scorer was Chris Boniol, who defected to the Eagles. He wouldn't be the first kicker to affect the balance of power in a division race. Two years ago, Morten Andersen moved from New Orleans to Atlanta and kicked the Falcons into the playoffs by kicking the Saints out.

Dallas Cowboys

As worn out as the Cowboys appear, it is still difficult to like any of the other NFC East quarterbacks over Troy Aikman, the glue of a faltering franchise. The pressure on Aikman to score will be greater than ever because the Cowboy defense is without the suspended Leon Lett and the injured Charles Haley and must be happy with weekend contributions from baseball's Deion Sanders early in the season.

Barry Switzer is counting on Emmitt Smith's legs and Michael Irvin's head to rebound from subpar showings. A five-week mid-season stretch with trips to the Giants, Redskins, Eagles, and 49ers will give rivals the chance to close the lid on this Dallas era.

Washington Redskins*

The worst team in the league at stopping the run last year, the Redskins vow to begin a new life in Maryland with a stouter defensive front. Adding Sean Gilbert last year wasn't nearly enough, and a misleading 7-1 start turned into a 2-6 finish.

So Norv Turner hired ex-Giants coordinator Mike Nolan to revamp the defense. No other NFC team had a bigger disparity between yards allowed and yards gained. The problems go beyond just one side of the ball, however. Wide receiver Michael Westbrook's health is vital to the success of quarterback Gus Frerotte.

Philadelphia Eagles*

Will Rodney Peete beat out Ty Detmer as the No. 1 quarterback, as he did last year before he got hurt? Will the starter complement the other weapons that Ray Rhodes has assembled? Will Ricky Watters ever be happy?

These are some of the questions the Eagles must answer before they take their next step. They will start to find out in the second week of the season against the Packers and in the third week against the Cowboys. Last year, the Eagles failed tests against both teams in the first five weeks. Statistically, only the Packers and the Broncos were better both offensively and defensively. But the Eagles must start to win the big games.

Arizona Cardinals

Drafting Arizona State quarterback Jake Plummer was the most popular move this franchise could have made. Even if Plummer doesn't beat out Kent Graham, fans are likely to follow him to Sun Devil Stadium out of habit.

Coach Vince Tobin has to tighten the defense. The Cardinals were doomed by yielding more points than anyone in the division. A better running game would relieve some of the pressure.

New York Giants

Jim Fassel, formerly the Cardinals' offensive coordinator, must rescue the worst offense in the league. His mission is to salvage Dave Brown, whose pass-efficiency rating was last in the NFC. Drafting Florida receiver Ike Hilliard No. 1 was the first step toward improvement. Adding third-down back Tiki Barber was the second.

Fassel did a good job with ex-Giants quarterback Graham in Arizona, so Brown should be a familiar challenge for him. The other challenge is to keep afloat a defense that gave up only 18.6 points per game and still couldn't win.



Cowboys' Emmitt Smith

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DALLAS COWBOYS



More than ever, the Cowboys' fortunes rest on the shoulders of Aikman, Smith, and Irvin.

Troy Aikman makes Dallas the favorite in the NFC East.



The Cowboys put their experience on the line (below, from left to right): Ray Donaldson, Nate Newton, Larry Allen, and Erik Williams.

The Cowboys had plenty to celebrate last year. Their fifth straight NFC East title is unprecedented. Their 24 postseason appearances are the most of any team since the Cowboys joined the NFL. Their nine Pro Bowl players led the league.

Mostly, they celebrated the end of the year, when they could put controversy and injury behind them. The Cowboys will never be quite the same. Their image tarnished by a penchant for breaking the law and league rules, they are in a battle with themselves for survival.

The Big Three

More than ever, the team's fortunes rest with **Troy Aikman, Emmitt Smith, and Michael Irvin**. They must correct the shortage of points on offense and come to the aid of a defense that was gallant in defeat last year but continues to erode.

Tackle **Leon Lett** is out for at least most of the season, serving a drug suspension. End **Charles Haley's** back appears to have finally given out. Linebacker **Darrin Smith** has gone to Philadelphia and safety **George**

Teague to Miami. Cornerback **Deion Sanders** is squeezing early-season practices and games into his baseball schedule.

With Irvin missing the first five games last season due to suspension and favorite Aikman target **Jay Novacek** missing the whole season at tight end due to an injury, points dropped from 435 to 286, touchdowns from 51 to 27. Smith's TDs fell from an NFL-record 25 to 12. His per-carry average went from 4.7 yards to 3.7. Novacek's future is so doubtful that the Cowboys traded up to draft LSU tight end **David LaFleur**.

Adding more pressure to the Big Three is the defection of placekicker **Chris Boniol** to Philadelphia. Because the offense stalled so often short of the goal line, Boniol led the Cowboys in scoring.

Long-running Record

Smith, 28, faces the question of durability after carrying the ball more times in the last seven years (2,334) than anyone else. Injuries hampered his season, and the inevitable issue of tired legs greets him this year. Smith has spent more time in the weight room and is eager to meet the challenge.

To make sure Smith has everything he needs to rebound, Cowboys owner **Jerry Jones** paid fullback **Daryl Johnston** more money (\$7.6 million over five years, including a \$2 million bonus) than a normal 31-year-old blocking back might expect. It was a reward not only for the Moose's unsung but vital role in the offense, but for his good example off the field. The cheering you hear is from Smith and Aikman.

Reception Line

Irvin led the team in receiving, but he got into the end zone only twice as defenses were able to concentrate on him. **Eric Bjornson** caught more passes (48) than any other NFC tight end except Carolina's **Wesley Walls**, but he got into the end zone only three times. Finding a reliable every-down receiver opposite Irvin is a priority for coach **Barry Switzer** this year. Sanders is not the answer, proving after last year's experiment that he is a much better defender than receiver. **Kevin Williams** and **Kelvin Martin** have attributes as third receivers, but the Cowboys have not yet replaced the threat **Alvin Harper** used to provide. LaFleur could play an immediate role.

the numbers

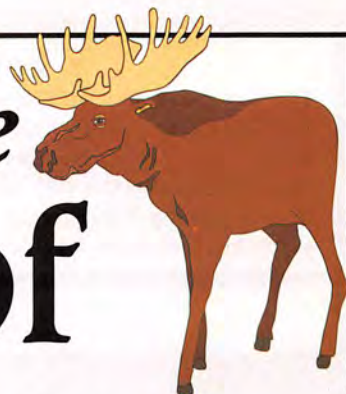
team stats & league rank

Total Offense	297.7	24
Passing	195.1	20
Rushing	102.6	18
Scoring	17.9	25
Punting	42.6	17
Punt Returns	9.0	T21
Kick Returns	25.3	2
Total Defense	273.9	3
Against Pass	175.4	2
Against Run	98.5	9
Points Allowed	15.6	3
Interceptions	19	T14
Sacks	37	T10





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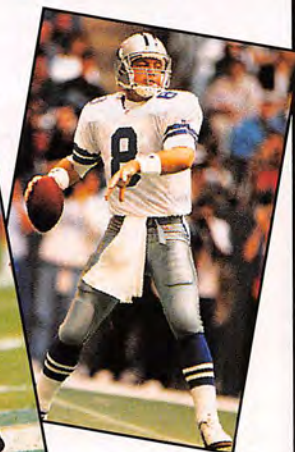
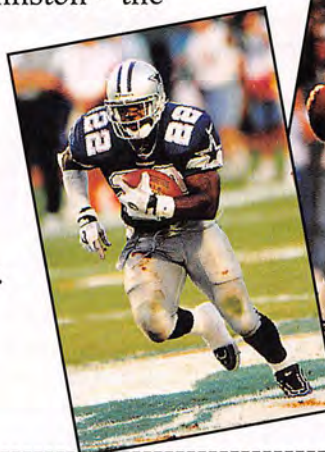
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the key stats

The Cowboys yielded the fewest sacks (19) in the NFC and the lowest touchdown percentage (35.7) in the red zone. **Emmitt Smith** needs two TDs to pass John Riggins for fifth place in the NFL record book. He led the Cowboys in rushing (1,204 yards). **Troy Aikman** passed for 3,126 yards but had more interceptions (13) than TDs (12).



The Cowboys need a healthy Emmitt Smith (above) in the NFC East.

Experience on the Line

The Cowboys need another year from one of the best and oldest lines in the game. Center **Ray Donaldson** is 39, left tackle **Mark Tuinei** is 37, and left guard **Nate Newton** is 35. Right guard **Larry Allen** and right tackle **Erik Williams** are still in their 20s. The line allowed the fewest sacks in the league (19).

Coordinator **Dave Campo's** defense was No. 3 in the NFL, a remarkable accomplishment for a unit under such pressure. Only Green Bay and Carolina gave up fewer points. But now the defense must perform without **Lett** and probably without **Haley**, its two best players on the front four. Second-year man **Randall Godfrey** and rookie third-rounder **Dexter Coakley** will have to step up beside middle linebacker **Fred Strickland**.

The Cowboys went out of their way to keep line-backer/pass rusher **Broderick Thomas**, who will help ends **Shante Carver** and **Tony Tolbert** up front. **Chad Hennings** and **Tony Casillas** are the tackles, but **Hennings** is coming off surgery on both elbows and **Casillas** is 34. Fourth-rounder **Antonio Anderson** must develop fast. Second-year end **Kavika Pittman** will also get a chance to contribute.

Secondary Concerns

Sanders doesn't think he will miss any football games during the baseball season, which overlaps the first five NFL games. **Alundis Brice** broke a kneecap in the weight room. With **Teague** gone, the Cowboys re-signed **Brock Marion**, who will compete with **Roger Harper** at free safety opposite all-pro strong safety **Darren Woodson**, still the glue of the secondary. Cornerback **Kevin Smith** is solid on the other side.

The Cowboys lost punter **John Jett** (Lions) and coverage specialist **Jim Schwantz** (49ers). That puts pressure on the ageless **Herschel Walker**, 35, to continue his outstanding kickoff returning so the Cowboys can win the field-position battles.

DALLAS COWBOYS

Barry Switzer, Head Coach

Hudson Houck, Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Line; Dave Campo, Defensive Coordinator; Ernie Zampese, Offensive Coordinator; Hubbard Alexander, Receivers; Joe Avezzano, Special Teams; Jim Bates, Linebackers; Craig Boller, Defensive Tackles; Joe Brodsky, Running Backs; Robert Ford, Tight Ends; Tommy Hart, Defensive Ends; Steve Hoffman, Kickers/Quality Control; Joe Jurazsek, Strength and Conditioning; Clancy Pendergast, Defensive Assistant/Quality Control; Jack Reilly, Quarterbacks; Mike Zimmer, Defensive Backs

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
8	Aikman, Troy	QB	6-4	223	11/21/66	8 UCLA
17	Garrett, Jason	QB	6-2	195	3/28/66	4 Princeton
11	Wilson, Wade	QB	6-3	206	2/1/59	16 East Texas State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
73	Allen, Larry	T	6-3	326	11/27/71	3 Sonoma State
53	Donaldson, Ray	C	6-3	311	5/18/58	17 Georgia
63	Flannery, John	G	6-3	304	1/13/69	6 Syracuse
69	Hegamin, George	T	6-7	331	2/14/73	3 North Carolina State
70	Hellestrae, Dale	C	6-5	286	7/11/62	12 Southern Methodist
66	Hutson, Tony	G	6-3	313	3/13/74	1 Northeastern Oklahoma S
61	Newton, Nate	G	6-3	320	12/20/61	11 Florida A&M
50	Shiver, Clay	C	6-2	294	12/7/72	1 Florida State
71	Tuinei, Mark	T	6-5	314	3/31/60	14 Hawaii
79	Williams, Erik	T	6-6	324	9/7/68	6 Central State

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
48	Johnston, Daryl	RB	6-2	242	2/10/66	8 Syracuse
22	Smith, Emmitt	RB	5-9	209	5/15/69	7 Florida
20	Williams, Sherman	RB	5-8	191	8/13/73	2 Alabama

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Bjornson, Eric	TE	6-4	236	12/15/71	2 Washington
87	Davis, Billy	WR	6-1	197	7/6/72	2 Pittsburgh
88	Irvin, Michael	WR	6-2	207	3/5/66	9 Miami (FL)
84	Novacek, Jay	TE	6-4	234	10/24/62	12 Wyoming
89	Ware, Derek	TE	6-2	255	9/17/67	5 Central Oklahoma
81	Watkins, Kendall	TE	6-1	282	3/8/73	2 Mississippi State
80	Williams, Stepfret	WR	6-1	170	6/14/73	1 Northeast Louisiana

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
91	Benson, Darren	DT	6-7	308	8/25/74	2 Trinity Valley C.C.
96	Carver, Shante	DE	6-5	253	2/12/71	3 Arizona State
75	Casillas, Tony	DT	6-3	278	10/26/63	11 Oklahoma
94	Haley, Charles	DE	6-5	255	1/6/64	11 James Madison
95	Hennings, Chad	DT	6-6	295	10/20/65	5 Air Force
97	Pittman, Kavika	DE	6-6	263	10/9/74	1 McNeese State
62	Renfro, Leonard	DT	6-3	312	6/29/70	4 Colorado
92	Tolbert, Tony	DE	6-6	263	12/29/67	8 Texas-El Paso
93	Ulfale, Mike	DT	6-4	277	2/1/72	1 Brigham Young

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
29	Brice, Alundis	CB	5-10	178	5/1/70	2 Mississippi
35	Davis, Wendell	CB	5-10	183	6/27/73	1 Oklahoma
24	Harper, Roger	S	6-2	225	10/26/70	4 Ohio State
31	Marion, Brock	S	5-11	193	6/11/70	4 Nevada
21	Sanders, Deion	CB	6-1	196	8/9/67	8 Florida State
26	Smith, Kevin	CB	5-11	188	4/7/70	5 Texas A&M
42	Williams, Charlie	S	6-1	189	2/2/72	2 Bowling Green
28	Woodson, Darren	S	6-1	216	4/25/69	5 Arizona State

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
57	Campos, Alan	LB	6-3	236	3/3/73	1 Louisville
56	Godfrey, Randall	LB	6-2	237	4/6/73	1 Georgia
55	Strickland, Fred	LB	6-2	250	8/15/66	9 Purdue
51	Thomas, Broderick	LB	6-4	242	2/20/67	8 Nebraska

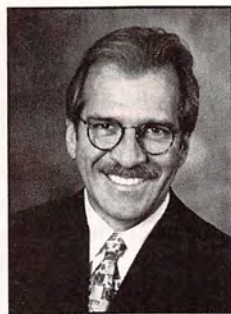
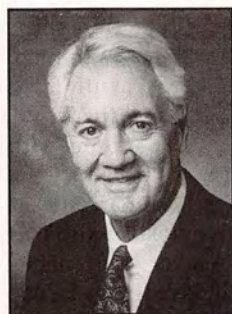
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
81	Armstrong, Tyji*	TE	6-4	277	10/3/70	6	Mississippi
40	Bates, William*	S	6-1	213	6/6/61	15	Tennessee
72	Childress, Ray*	DT	6-6	272	10/20/62	13	Texas A&M
23	Frazier, Derrick*	CB	5-11	183	4/29/70	5	Texas A&M
60	Kennard, Derek*	G/C	6-3	333	9/9/62	11	Nevada-Reno
83	Martin, Kelvin*	WR	5-9	162	5/14/65	11	Boston College
99	McCormack, Hurvin*	DT	6-5	284	4/6/72	4	Indiana
82	Mitchell, Johnny*	TE	6-3	241	1/20/71	6	Nebraska
36	Ross, Dominique*	RB	6-0	203	1/12/72	1	Valdosta State
34	Walker, Herschel*	RB	6-1	225	3/3/62	12	Georgia
85	Williams, Kevin*	WR	5-9	194	1/25/71	5	Miami

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	22	David LaFleur	TE	6-7	280	LSU
3	65	Dexter Coakley	LB	5-10	215	Appalachian State
3	83	Steve Scifres	T	6-3	297	Wyoming
3	94	Kenny Wheaton	DB	5-9	189	Oregon
4	101	Antonio Anderson	DT	6-6	307	Syracuse
4	127	Macey Brooks	WR	6-4	214	James Madison
4	129	Nicky Sualea	RB	5-10	245	Ohio State
6	187	Lee Vaughn	DB	5-11	175	Wyoming
7	224	Omar Stoutmire	DB	5-11	198	Fresno State

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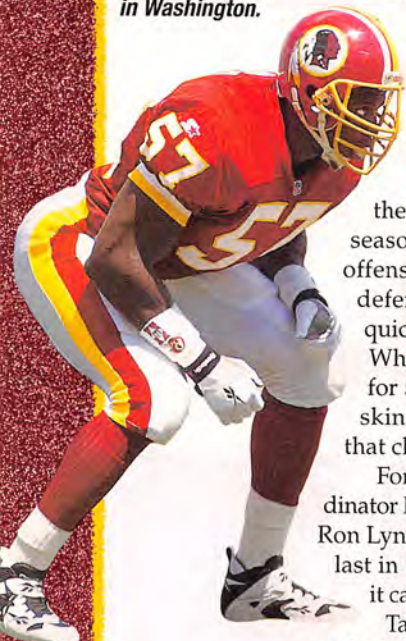
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WASHINGTON REDSKINS



The Redskins' defense gave up yardage as quickly as the offense gained it last year.

Ken Harvey has averaged 10 sacks per year in Washington.



The Redskins leave D.C. for the Maryland suburbs and a new stadium built and financed by Jack Kent Cooke, who died before he could see his latest dream. Cooke was a visionary owner who demonstrated unusual confidence in coach **Norv Turner** and GM Charley Casserly to return his franchise to its glory days.

When the Redskins started 7-1 in '96, only Cooke was not surprised. When they finished 2-6, Cooke reacted by extending the contracts of Turner and Casserly.

Give and Take

The contrast between the first and second half of the season was as different as the offense and the defense. The defense gave up yardage as quickly as the offense gained it. When Boomer Esiason passed for 522 yards against the Redskins in week 10, it was clear that changes had to be made.

Former Giants defensive coordinator Mike Nolan takes over from Ron Lynn. When a defense finishes last in the league against the run, it calls for desperate measures.

Tackle **Sean Gilbert** got three sacks in his first three games but was shut out the rest of the way, an indication that he needs help.

Caught in the Draft

Change is expected from front to back on the defense. No. 1 pick **Kenard Lang** will challenge left

end **Tony Woods** for a starting spot, with **Dexter Nottage** and **Sterling Palmer** in the wings. **Marc Boutte**, back from an injury, will try to reclaim left tackle from **William Gaines**. **Gilbert** and **Rich Owens** remain starters on the right side.

No. 2 pick **Greg Jones**, a linebacker/defensive end at Colorado, will try to make the transition to outside linebacker. If Jones is good enough, leading tackler **Marcus Patton** will be able to shift to the middle, where **Rod Stephens** is out. If Jones isn't ready, second-year man **Patrise Alexander** is another possibility in the middle.

Ken Harvey is an all-pro at left linebacker who expects more than the nine sacks he got last season behind a front that **Gilbert** was supposed to fortify. No. 3 pick **Derek Smith** is another outside linebacker who will lend depth at a troublesome spot.

Cornerstones

In the secondary, the Redskins made a bold move by letting transition cornerback **Tom Carter** sign with the Bears and replacing him with former Oiler **Cris Dishman**. **Turner** claims the defense will be better with the 32-year-old **Dishman** than it was with the 25-year-old

Carter. **Dishman** and the ageless **Darrell Green**, 37, give Nolan two of the best cover corners in football, a luxury that enables him to experiment with all kinds of things to stop the run.

When strong safety **Jesse Campbell** was released by the Giants, Nolan gave him a job. He is expected to unseat **Darryl Pounds**, with free safety **Stanley Richard** staying put unless second-year men **Brian Walker** and **Leomont Evans** develop quickly. Rookies **Jamel Williams** and **Keith Thibodeaux** will make the competition interesting.

On the Offensive

This is a defense that also has the highest-scoring offense in the NFC East on its side, which should make Nolan's job more enjoyable. The short-lived **Heath Shuler** era is over, now that he has been traded to the Saints, so **Gus Frerotte** enters his first season without any controversy.

The key to the attack is receiver **Michael Westbrook**. Entering his third season, he is as intimidating an offensive threat as there is in the NFL, but was on the field for only 42 percent of the offen-

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	326.8	9
Passing	207.4	15
Rushing	119.4	7
Scoring	22.8	8
Punting	45.1	4
Punt Returns	11.2	9
Kick Returns	21.6	T18
Total Defense	357.7	28
Against Pass	215.5	20
Against Run	142.2	30
Points Allowed	19.5	13
Interceptions	21	11
Sacks	34	T17

Gus Frerotte threw for 3,453 yards and 12 TDs.



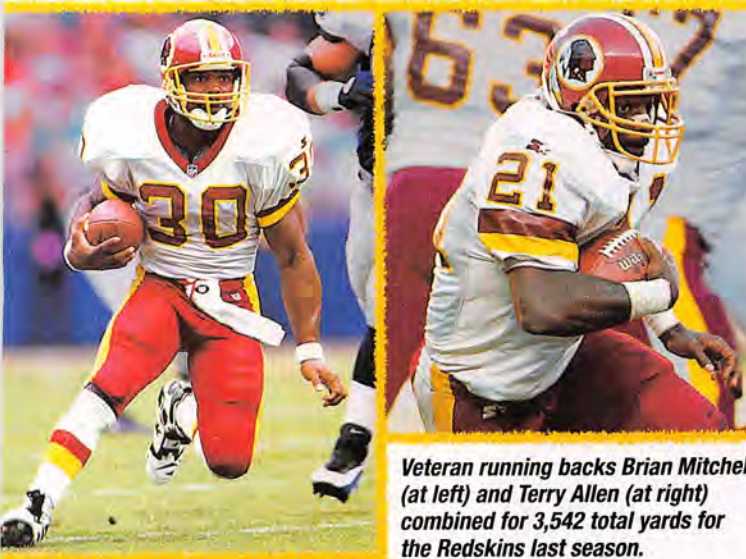
the key stats

Terry Allen has averaged 4.3 yards on grass and 3.9 yards on artificial turf in his career. **Henry Ellard** averaged a league-high 19.5 yards on his 52 catches. He needs 45 more receptions to pass Steve Largent (819) for third place all-time in the NFL. **Darrell Green** is second among active players with 43 interceptions (Eugene Robinson has 48).

sive snaps last season, having been hampered by knee injuries.

If Westbrook can stay healthy alongside the marvelous 36-year-old **Henry Ellard**, with speedy third receiver **Leslie Shepherd** around, **Frerotte** can't help but improve his 12-11 ratio of touchdown passes to interceptions. **Frerotte** took every snap but one last season, and **Turner** says he has enough confidence in the untested **Trent Green** to forget about **Shuler**.

Tight end **Jamie Asher** led the team with only four TD



Veteran running backs Brian Mitchell (at left) and Terry Allen (at right) combined for 3,542 total yards for the Redskins last season.

receptions because the Redskins were able to rely on running back **Terry Allen** to punch it into the end zone.

Run for the Money

Allen will be hard-pressed to duplicate his league-leading 21 touchdowns and club-record 1,353 yards, but a new \$14.8 million contract says the team is certainly counting on him. At 29, Allen has put two scary knee surgeries behind him and proved the Vikings wrong for letting him go. **Marc Logan** is a reliable fullback. And **Brian Mitchell**, the third-down back and kick returner, joined the elite company of **Jim Brown** and **Gale Sayers** as the only players to lead the NFL in combined yardage three years in a row—and he did it playing only 27 percent of the team's offensive snaps in '96!

Up front, the Redskins expect the return from an injury of **Cory Raymer** at center between 330-pound guards **Tré Johnson** and **Bob Dahl**. Ed Simmons, a 335-pound right tackle, is coming off a knee injury. Left tackle **Joe Patton** is the little guy at 308. **Shar Pourdaneish**, who started eight games as a 320-pound rookie, and center **Jeff Uhlenhake** provide depth.

Matt Turk is the best punter in the NFC and **Scott Blanton** hit on 81 percent of his field goals, the second-best average in club history.

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Norv Turner, Head Coach

Mike Nolan, Defensive Coordinator; Earl Leggett, Defensive Line; Dale Lindsey, Linebackers; Tom Hayes, Defensive Backs; LeCharles McDaniel, Defensive Assistant; Russ Grimm, Offensive Line; Mike Martz, Quarterbacks; Michael Pope, Tight Ends; Bobby Jackson, Running Backs; Terry Robiskie, Wide Receivers; Pete Rodriguez, Special Teams; Dan Riley, Strength Coach; Jason Arapoff, Conditioning Director

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
15	Hollas, Donald	QB	6-3	215	11/22/67	6	Rice
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
68	Batiste, Michael	G	6-3	305	12/24/70	2	Tulane
75	Dahl, Bob	G	6-5	330	1/15/68	5	Notre Dame
69	Johnson, Andre	T	6-5	317	8/25/73	1	Penn State
77	Johnson, Tre	T	6-2	330	8/30/71	3	Temple
67	Pourdaneish, Shar	T	6-6	320	07/19/70	1	Nevada
52	Raymer, Cory	C	6-2	300	3/3/73	2	Wisconsin
71	Reem, Matt	T	6-6	270	12/23/72	1	Minnesota
59	Sedoris, Christopher	C	6-3	286	4/25/73	1	Purdue
76	Simmons, Ed	T	6-5	335	12/31/63	10	Eastern Washington
74	Thure, Brian	T	6-5	303	9/3/73	2	California
61	Wagner, Keith	T	6-4	300	1/22/70	2	Abilene Christian
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Allen, Terry	RB	5-10	208	2/21/68	6	Clemson
36	Bell, William	RB	5-11	212	7/22/71	3	Georgia Tech
47	Bowie, Larry	RB	6-1	224	3/21/73	1	Georgia
48	Davis, Stephen	RB	6-1	231	3/1/74	1	Auburn
20	Logan, Marc	RB	6-1	218	5/9/65	10	Kentucky
30	Mitchell, Brian	RB	5-10	220	8/18/68	7	Southwestern Louisiana
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
84	Asher, Jamie	TE	6-3	243	10/31/72	2	Louisville
87	Bishop, Harold	TE	6-4	250	4/8/70	3	Louisiana State
48	Brooks, Steve	TE	6-5	245	6/2/71	1	Occidental
85	Ellard, Henry	WR	5-11	188	7/21/61	14	Fresno State
89	Galbraith, Scott	TE	6-2	263	1/7/67	7	Southern California
13	Maxwell, DeAndre	WR	6-1	213	4/6/73	1	San Diego State
83	Mays, Damon	WR	5-9	170	5/20/68	5	Missouri
18	Olive, Bobby	WR	5-11	170	4/22/69	2	Ohio State
86	Shepherd, Leslie	WR	5-11	178	11/3/69	3	Temple
89	Thomas, Chris	WR	6-1	180	7/16/71	2	Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo
82	Westbrook, Michael	WR	6-3	215	7/7/72	2	Colorado
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
72	Bandison, Romeo	DT	6-5	290	2/12/71	2	Oregon
90	Barnett, Troy	DT	6-5	293	5/24/71	3	North Carolina
93	Boutte, Marc	DT	6-4	311	7/26/69	5	Louisiana State
95	Gaines, William	DT	6-5	305	6/20/71	3	Florida
78	Kuehl, Ryan	DT	6-4	276	1/18/72	1	Virginia
92	Nottage, Dexter	DE	6-4	291	11/14/70	3	Florida A&M
96	Owens, Rich	DE	6-6	263	5/22/72	2	Lehigh
97	Palmer, Sterling	DE	6-5	278	2/4/71	4	Florida State
96	Rucker, Keith	DT	6-4	332	11/20/68	5	Ohio Wesleyan
55	Uhlenhake, Jeff	C	6-3	284	1/28/66	8	Ohio State
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
23	Barnes, Tomur	CB	5-10	188	9/8/70	3	North Texas
37	Campbell, Jesse	S	6-1	215	4/11/69	5	North Carolina State
28	Dishman, Cris	CB	6-1	188	8/13/65	9	Purdue
41	Evans, Greg	S	6-1	208	6/28/71	2	Texas Christian
35	Evans, Leomont	S	6-1	194	7/12/74	1	Clemson
28	Green, Darrell	CB	5-8	184	2/15/60	14	Texas A&M-Kingsville
26	Oliver, Muhammad	CB	5-11	188	3/12/69	5	Oregon
31	Pounds, Darryl	CB	5-10	179	7/21/72	2	Nicholls State
24	Richard, Stanley	S	6-2	195	10/21/67	6	Texas
29	Turner, Scott	CB	5-10	178	2/26/72	2	Illinois
45	Walker, Bryan	S	6-2	186	5/31/72	1	Washington State
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Alexander, Patrice	LB	6-1	248	10/23/72	1	Southwestern Louisiana
57	Harvey, Ken	LB	6-2	239	5/6/65	9	California
53	Patton, Marcus	LB	6-2	246	5/1/67	7	UCLA
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
16	Blanton, Scott	K	6-2	218	7/1/73	1	Oklahoma
1	Turk, Matt	P	6-5	229	6/16/68	2	Wisconsin-Whitewater
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
83	Anderson, Flipper*	WR	6-0	176	3/7/65	9	UCLA
73	Ashmore, Darryl*	T	6-7	310	11/1/69	5	Northwestern
80	Brooks, William*	WR	6-0	193	4/6/64	11	Boston
50	Brownlow, Darrick*	LB	6-0	246	12/28/68	6	Illinois
54	Catanho, Alcides*	LB	6-4	230	1/20/72	2	Rutgers
12	Frerotte, Gus	QB	6-2	228	7/3/71	3	Tulsa
94	Gilbert, Sean	DT	6-5	303	4/10/70	5	Pittsburgh
10	Green, Trent	QB	6-3	213	7/9/70	3	Indiana
88	Jenkins, James*	TE	6-2	249	8/17/67	6	Rutgers
64	Matich, Trevor*	C	6-4	287	10/9/61	12	BYU
38	Morrison, Darryl*	S	5-11	196	5/19/71	3	Arizona
68	Patton, Joe	G	6-5	308	1/5/72	3	Alabama A&M
27	Taylor, Keith*	S	5-11	212	12/21/64	8	Illinois
91	Vanderbeek, Matt*	LB	6-3	255	8/16/67	7	Michigan State
98	Woods, Tony*	DE	6-4	278	10/11/65	10	Pittsburgh

* Unrestricted Free Agent

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	17	Kenard Lang	DE	6-4	277	Miami
2	51	Greg Jones	LB	6-4	240	Colorado
3	80	Derek Smith	LB	6-1	238	Arizona State
4	115	Albert Connell	WR	6-0	187	Texas A&M
5	132	Jamel Williams	DB	6-0	205	Nebraska
5	140	Keith Thibodeaux	DB	5-11	185	Northwest Louisiana
5	148	Twan Russell	LB	6-1	230	Miami
5	162	Brad Badger	G	6-4	297	Stanford

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES



The Eagles have the makings of a genuine contender but are uncertain at quarterback.

Managing turmoil is one of Ray Rhodes's strengths. Despite injury and constant lineup juggling, the Eagles have made the playoffs the last two seasons.

In Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, the competition starts at quarterback. With last year's savior Ty Detmer haggling over a contract, the Eagles drafted brother Koy Detmer for reasons known only to Rhodes, who already has Rodney Peete and Bobby Hoying on the roster.

Passing Grades

Peete beat out Detmer last season, but he suffered a knee injury in the fifth game. When Detmer finished with a 7-4 record, surpassing all expectations, he still failed to earn himself a permanent place in Rhodes's plans. After all, the Eagles were shut out in their playoff opener by the 49ers.

Detmer's seven interceptions in the final four games (three of which were returned for touchdowns) have a way of sticking in the mind of any coach. So while Hoying is still the club's quarterback of the future, nobody is quite certain about the quarterback of the present. This is a gnawing reality for a club that has the makings elsewhere of a genuine contender. The Eagles finished fourth in offense and fifth in defense and were the only team to finish in the top 10 in the NFL in rushing and passing offense and defense.

On the Run

If the Eagles are to take the next step, the quarterback has to lead the way in coordinator Jon Gruden's version of the West Coast offense. Running back Ricky Watters already has demonstrated he can't carry the team alone, even though he constantly whines that Gruden does not give him the chance.

Ricky Watters, the NFL's busiest runner.

In truth, Watters led the league in carries as well as complaints. In the last half of the season, his average dropped from 97.8 yards per game to 78.6, and his rushing average from 4.5 to 3.5. So the drafting of South Carolina's Duce Staley in the third round to join third-down back Charlie Garner is an interesting move in a backfield Watters thinks is already overcrowded. Fullback Kevin Turner caught 43 passes and averaged more yards per reception (9.5) than Watters (8.7), who is one of the league's best receivers out of the backfield.

The skill-position weapons are in place. Veteran Irving Fryar and third-year pro Chris T. Jones

give the Eagles one of the league's best tandems at wide receiver. Rookie tight end Jason Dunn averaged a league-high 22.1 yards on his 15 receptions.

Transition Lines

The Eagles landed center Steve Everitt from the Ravens to upgrade a line that will undergo transition until opening day. Rhodes needs to settle the left side, where last year's No. 1 pick, Jermaine Mayberry, did little after contracting pneumonia in training camp. He will compete with Barrett Brooks. Lester

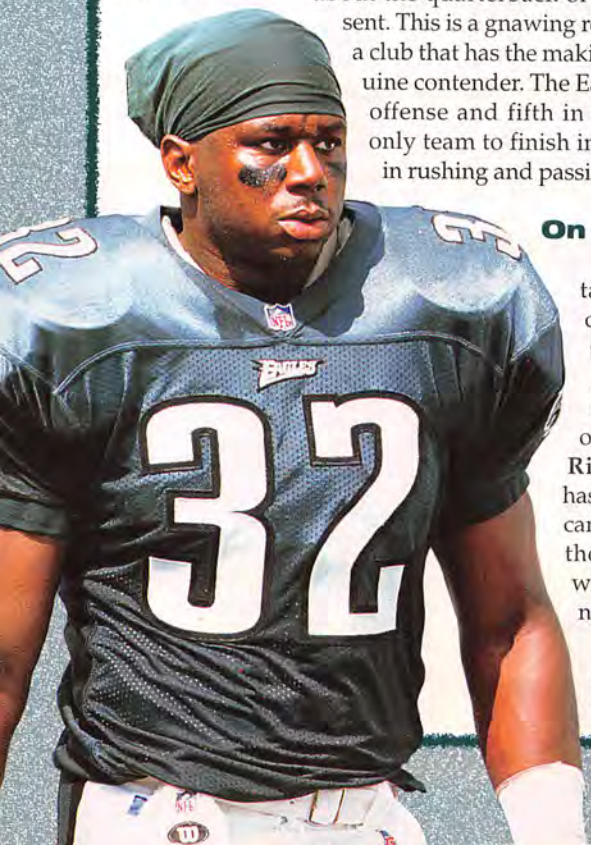
Holmes is the incumbent left guard with the impending departure of Guy McIntyre. The right side is more stable, with Joe Panos at guard and Richard Cooper at tackle.

The departure of end William Fuller to San Diego shook up the defense. The veteran led the team with 13 sacks during a year when the team total of 40 was its lowest since 1993. How to replace such a steady performer is a problem that may haunt the Eagles.

Virginia's big Jon Harris, a surprise No. 1 pick, will get first crack at Fuller's spot. If tackle Andy Harmon can't recover sufficiently from a knee injury that kept him out of all but two games, the front could be in trouble. Rhett Hall and last year's rookie surprise Hollis Thomas will fight for the other tackle, assuming Harmon is well. Mike Mamula had eight sacks and improved against the run in his second season. The Eagles figure to add veterans along the front as other teams jettison big-contract players during the summer. Fifth-rounder Ndukwe Kalu is a former track star who is seen as a situational pass rusher.



William Thomas, the Eagles' defensive MVP.

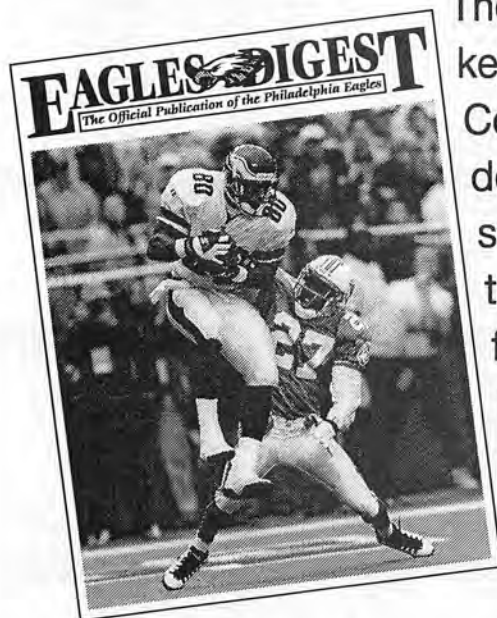


the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	351.7	4
Passing	234.1	4
Rushing	117.6	9
Scoring	22.7	9
Punting	42.0	T20
Punt Returns	8.3	26
Kick Returns	22.5	11
Total Defense	284.0	5
Against Pass	186.2	6
Against Run	98.9	10
Points Allowed	21.3	21
Interceptions	19	T14
Sacks	40	t8

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the key stats

Ricky Watters had the most carries (353) in the league and the most first downs (92) in the NFC. He ran for 1,411 yards and 13 touchdowns. New kicker **Chris Boniol** scored 120 points last year for Dallas. **Ty Detmer** threw for 2,911 yards and 15 TDs with 13 interceptions. **Irving Fryar** caught 88 passes, including 66 for first downs and 11 for TDs.

Upgrade at Linebacker

The selection of middle linebacker **James Darling** in the second round should upgrade an area that was manned last season by **James Willis**. The addition of fast **Darrin Smith** to replace second-year man **Ray Farmer** opposite Pro Bowler **William Thomas** gives the Eagles better flexibility outside than they have had under Rhodes. Ex-safety Farmer was productive as a rookie and figures in the mix.

The secondary is very solid and will give defensive coordinator **Emmitt Thomas** some options on rushing the passer. Cornerbacks **Troy Vincent** and **Bobby Taylor** have the size and speed to match up against some of the bigger receivers in the division such as **Michael Westbrook**, **Michael Irvin**, and **Rob Moore**. Free safety **Brian Dawkins** enjoyed such an outstanding rookie season that Rhodes expects to see him in the Pro Bowl soon. **Mike Zordich** finished the year at strong safety, where fourth-rounder **Damien Robinson** will get a look.

Extra Points

With more than adequate room under the salary cap, the Eagles stole **Chris Boniol** from Dallas in a move they ardently hope will haunt the Cowboys. Boniol connected on 32 of 36 field goals in '96. The Eagles outscored the Cowboys by 77 points last season.

Boniol's kickoffs also should give the defense better field position. **Tom Hutton** needs to improve his ratio of punts dropped inside the 20 (17) to touchbacks (9). **Derrick Witherspoon** returned two kickoffs for touchdowns.

Wide receivers Irving Fryar (left) and Chris T. Jones (right) will provide the Eagles' quarterbacks with two pairs of helping hands.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Ray Rhodes, Head Coach

Jon Gruden, Offensive Coordinator; Emmitt Thomas, Defensive Coordinator; Bill Callahan, Offensive Line; Gerald Carr, Wide Receivers; Juan Castillo, Tight Ends; Chuck Knox, Jr., Defensive Assistant; Sean Payton, Quarterbacks; David Shaw, Offensive Assistant; Danny Smith, Defensive Backs; Mike Trgovac, Defensive Line; Joe Vitt, Linebackers; Ted Williams, Running Backs; Joe Wessel, Special Teams; Mike Wolf, Strength and Conditioning

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
14	Detmer, Ty	QB	6-1	194	10/30/67	4 Brigham Young
7	Hoying, Bobby	QB	6-3	221	9/20/72	1 Ohio State
9	Peete, Rodney	QB	6-1	225	3/16/66	8 Southern California

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
69	Boatswain, Harry	T	6-4	310	6/26/69	5 New Haven
76	Brooks, Barrett	T	6-4	309	5/5/72	2 Kansas State
64	Cavil, Ben	G	6-2	310	1/31/72	1 Oklahoma
77	Cooper, Richard	T	6-5	290	11/1/64	7 Tennessee
60	Devries, Jed	T	6-6	300	1/6/71	2 Utah State
75	Drake, Troy	T	6-6	289	5/15/72	2 Indiana
61	Everitt, Steve	C	6-5	290	8/21/70	4 Michigan
71	Mayberry, Jermaine	G	6-4	325	8/29/73	1 Texas A&M-Kingsville
65	Miller, Bubba	C	6-1	300	1/24/73	1 Tennessee
68	Unutoa, Morris	C	6-1	284	3/10/71	1 Brigham Young
72	Zandofsky, Mike	G	6-2	308	11/30/65	8 Washington

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
26	Croom, Corey	RB	5-11	208	5/22/71	4 Ball State
43	Harris, Rudy	RB	6-2	252	9/18/70	4 Clemson
23	Jones, Larry	RB	6-1	232	2/16/71	2 Miami
30	Jourdain, Yonel	RB	5-11	204	4/20/71	3 Southern Illinois
34	Turner, Kevin	RB	6-1	231	6/12/69	5 Alabama
32	Watters, Ricky	RB	6-1	217	4/7/69	5 Notre Dame
31	Witherspoon, Derrick	RB	5-10	196	2/14/71	2 Clemson

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Burks, Diaello	WR	6-2	181	7/7/74	1 Eastern Kentucky
17	Caldwell, Mike	WR	6-2	200	3/28/71	2 California
87	Dunn, Jason	TE	6-4	257	11/15/73	1 Eastern Kentucky
80	Fryar, Irving	WR	6-1	200	9/28/62	13 Nebraska
82	Jones, Chris T.	WR	6-3	209	8/7/71	2 Miami
17	Knox, Kevin	WR	6-2	199	1/30/71	3 Florida State
87	President, Andre	TE	6-3	255	6/16/71	2 Angelo State
84	Rhem, Steve	WR	6-2	212	11/9/71	3 Minnesota
88	Singleton, Nate	WR	5-11	190	7/5/68	4 Grambling
84	Solomon, Freddie	WR	5-10	180	8/15/72	2 South Carolina State
4	Strong, Jasper	WR	6-1	177	8/28/72	2 Illinois

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
71	Dillard, Stacey	DT	6-5	290	9/17/68	5 Oklahoma
96	Duff, John	DE	6-8	262	7/31/67	4 New Mexico
97	Hall, Rhett	DT	6-2	276	12/5/68	6 California
91	Harmon, Andy	DT	6-4	278	4/6/69	6 Kent State
79	Jefferson, Greg	DE	6-3	257	8/31/71	2 Central Florida
59	Mamula, Mike	DE	6-4	252	8/14/73	2 Boston College
98	Samson, Michael	DT	6-3	294	2/17/73	1 Grambling
78	Thomas, Hollis	DT	6-1	306	1/10/74	1 Northern Illinois

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
25	Boykin, Deral	S	5-11	198	9/27/70	4 Louisville
20	Dawkins, Brian	S	5-11	190	10/13/73	1 Clemson
22	Fuller, James	S	5-11	208	8/5/69	4 Portland State
22	Sutton, Eric	CB	5-10	169	10/24/72	1 San Diego State
21	Taylor, Bobby	CB	6-3	216	12/28/73	2 Notre Dame
23	Vincent, Troy	CB	6-1	194	6/8/70	5 Wisconsin
33	Watson, Tim	S	6-1	215	8/13/70	4 Howard
36	Zordich, Michael	S	6-1	212	10/12/63	10 Penn State

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
55	Farmer, Ray	LB	6-3	225	7/1/72	1 Duke
58	Marshall, Whit	LB	6-2	247	1/6/73	1 Georgia
59	Smith, Darrin	LB	6-1	230	4/15/70	4 Miami
51	Thomas, William	LB	6-2	223	8/13/68	6 Texas A&M
50	Willis, James	LB	6-2	237	9/2/72	4 Auburn
52	Wright, Sylvester	LB	6-2	258	12/30/71	2 Kansas

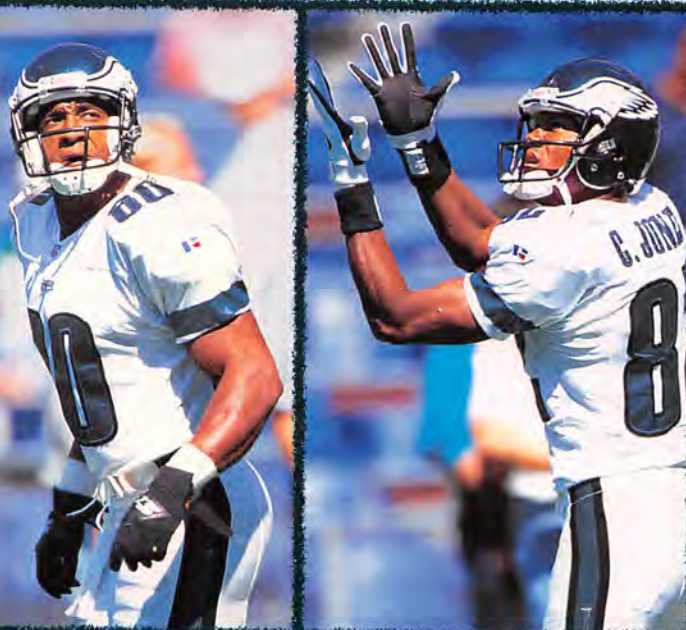
#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
18	Boniol, Chris	K	5-11	167	12/9/71	3 Louisiana Tech
4	Hutton, Tom	P	6-1	193	7/8/72	2 Tennessee

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Conner, Darion*	DE	6-2	250	9/28/67	7	Jackson State
30	Garner, Charlie	RB	5-9	187	2/13/72	3	Tennessee
73	Holmes, Lester*	G	6-3	305	9/27/69	4	Jackson State
85	Ingram, Mark*	WR	5-11	194	8/23/65	10	Michigan State
88	Johnson, Jimmie*	TE	6-2	257	10/6/66	8	Howard
56	Kelly, Joseph*	LB	6-2	235	12/11/64	11	Washington
62	McIntyre, Guy*	G	6-3	290	2/17/61	13	Georgia
72	Panos, Joe	G/C	6-2	293	1/24/71	3	Wisconsin
81	Seay, Mark*	WR	6-0	175	4/11/67	5	Long Beach State
29	Walker, Adam*	FB	6-1	210	6/7/68	4	Pittsburgh
89	Williams, Calvin*	WR	5-11	187	3/3/67	7	Purdue

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	25	Jon Harris	DE	6-7	280	Virginia
2	57	James Darling	LB	6-0	250	Washington State
3	71	Duce Staley	RB	5-11	220	South Carolina
4	119	Damien Robinson	S	6-2	210	Iowa
5	152	Ndukwe Kalu	DE	6-3	246	Rice
5	155	Luther Broughton	TE	6-2	248	Furman
6	190	Antwuan Wyatt	WR	5-10	199	Bethune-Cookman
6	198	Edward Jasper	DT	6-2	295	Texas A&M
7	207	Koy Detmer	QB	6-0	180	Colorado
7	225	Byron Capers	DB	6-1	194	Florida State
7	227	Deauntae Brown	DB	5-10	195	Central St. (Ohio)



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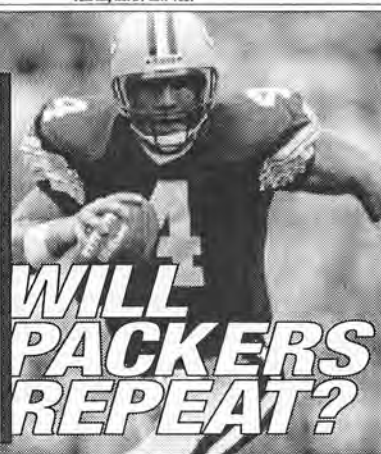
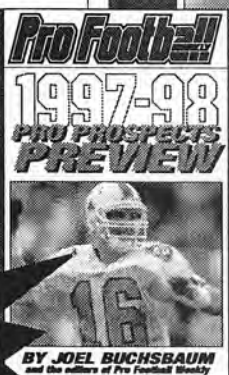
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OFFER EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 1, 1997

A71



The Cardinals need better balance on offense and more pressure from their defensive line.

Larry Centers is the game's best receiver out of the backfield.

The Cardinals thought they had a quarterback problem a year ago when Boomer Esiason got mad and couldn't take it anymore. Now, the Cardinals *know* they have a quarterback problem. This one, however, could turn out to be more pleasant. Even if No. 2 draft pick **Jake Plummer** doesn't compete with incumbent **Kent Graham** right away, Plummer will be warming up in the same Sun Devil Stadium where he led Arizona State. If he brings the ASU fans with him, the Cards will be ecstatic.

Despite a clear improvement in coach **Vince Tobin's** first year, the Cardinals were over-

shadowed by Plummer's Rose Bowl-bound Pac-10 champs. Now, the radio talk shows will be able to squeeze some Cardinal news onto the air. The down side is the added pressure on Tobin to win.

Quarterback Draw

If Graham falters, Tobin is likely to hear it. This will not be fair to Graham, who made significant strides under departed offensive coordinator Jim Fassel last year. And as diplomatic as Plummer may be, it won't be easy for him to sit back and watch, not when the hometown fans are glued to his every move. Graham could find it difficult to maintain his confidence knowing Plummer is destined to play. The only other quarterbacks on the roster are the untested **Stoney Case** and **Chad May**.

Once Plummer does get his chance, there are no guarantees of success, especially when expectations are so high. Mike Tomczak found it stifling to play quarterback in his hometown of Chicago. Jeff George discovered the same thing in Indianapolis. Bobby Hebert went through problems in New Orleans, and Bernie Kosar eventually found despair in Cleveland.

Balancing Act

The Cardinals led the NFL in first downs passing last season, but finished 29th in first downs rushing. Whoever is the quarterback in coordinator **Dick Jamieson's** new offense will need more balance. A lot depends on the development of second-year running back **Leeland McElroy**, who

showed promise late in the season when he took over for leading rusher **LeShon Johnson**.

McElroy and Johnson have great speed. McElroy is shifter, but nobody hits a hole faster than Johnson, whose 634 rushing yards included 126 on successive touchdown bursts in a game against New Orleans. McElroy is a better receiver, but the Cardinals already have the NFL's premier receiver out of the backfield in fullback **Larry Centers**. Re-signing free agent Centers was a major step in Tobin's plan to bring a winner to the Southwest. Without him, the offense sputters.

Wide receivers **Rob Moore** and **Frank Sanders**

provide experience and reliability, but not much of a deep threat. The Cardinals are hoping fifth-round sprint champion **Chad Carpenter** can help. **Anthony Edwards** is the third wideout. **Pat Carter** started every game at tight end, but second-year man **Johnnie McWilliams** and free agent **Chris Gedney** will compete for playing time.

At the tackles, **Lomas Brown** lost none of his Pro Bowl ability after arriving from Detroit, and **Joe Wolf** started 16 games for the first time in his career. **Mike Devlin** is the center and **Ron Selby** and **Anthony Red-**

mon are the guards. Fourth-rounder **Chris Dishman** of Nebraska has the kind of size and strength that could bolster the running game.

Pro Bowl cornerback Aeneas Williams is a big hitter.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

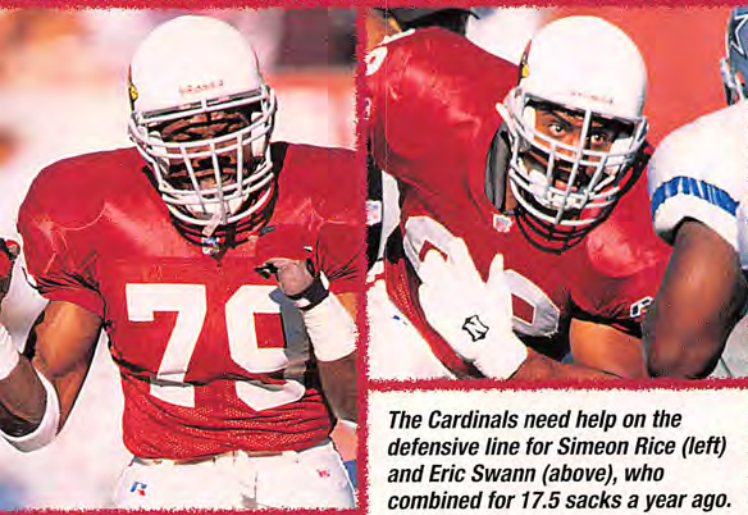
Total Offense	324.4	13
Passing	230.5	6
Rushing	93.9	25
Scoring	18.8	22
Punting	43.2	T12
Punt Returns	8.8	23
Kick Returns	21.1	22
Total Defense	335.1	21
Against Pass	218.7	21
Against Run	116.4	21
Points Allowed	24.8	26
Interceptions	11	T27
Sacks	28	T29



JOHN WILLIAMSON (2)

the key stats

Larry Centers has been the top pass-catching back in the league for the past two seasons. He had 99 receptions a year ago and 101 in 1995. **Kevin Butler** led the Cardinals in scoring (59 points). **Aeneas Williams** led in interceptions (six) and **Simeon Rice** in sacks (12.5). **Kent Graham** had an NFC-high 96.4 passer rating on third down.



The Cardinals need help on the defensive line for Simeon Rice (left) and Eric Swann (above), who combined for 17.5 sacks a year ago.

Problem Points

The defense under Tobin and coordinator Dave McGinnis improved, but it still gave up the most points in the NFC East. It also recorded fewer sacks (28) than any NFC team, even though **Simeon Rice** tied a rookie record with 12.5.

Part of the problem was that incomparable cornerback **Aeneas Williams**, whose six interceptions tied for the NFC lead at his position, did not have much help in the secondary, a situation Tobin addressed in the first and third rounds of his draft. Iowa's **Tom Knight** is expected to start opposite Williams, and Ohio State's **Ty Howard** could contribute immediately as a nickel back. The newcomers should enable safeties **Matt Darby** and **Brent Alexander** to become more effective.

Sack Time

Better coverage will also give Rice and company extra time to get to the passer. With the quick and powerful Eric Swann creating havoc at tackle, the line needs to be more productive. Swann got five sacks, but the players on either side of him, end **Michael Bankston** and tackle **Bernard Wilson**, combined for 1.5. Rice risked injury during the off-season with a curious decision to play minor league basketball, becoming the NFL lineman's version of Deion Sanders.

At linebacker, **Seth Joyner** showed he can still play by registering five sacks and making a mark in nine statistical categories. Middle linebacker **Eric Hill** finally got voted to the Pro Bowl for his stellar play in leading the team with a career-high 196 tackles. **Jamir Miller** started every game on the right side.

Special Teams

Ex-Bear **Kevin Butler** replaced kicker Greg Davis. **Jeff Feagles** is among the NFL's best placement punters. The Cards need someone to spell McElroy and **Marcus Dowdell** on returns.

ARIZONA CARDINALS

Vince Tobin, Head Coach

Dick Jamieson, Offensive Coordinator; Dave McGinnis, Defensive Coordinator; George Chryst, Tight Ends/Quality Control; Joe Greene, Defensive Line; Alan Everest, Special Teams; Larry Marmie, Defensive Backs; Carl Mauck, Offensive Line; Glenn Pires, Linebackers; Vic Rapp, Wide Receivers; Johnny Roland, Running Backs; Bob Rogucki, Strength and Conditioning

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
15	Case, Stony	QB	6-2	206	7/7/72	2	New Mexico
11	Graham, Kent	QB	6-5	242	11/1/68	5	Ohio State
5	May, Chad	QB	6-1	219	9/28/71	2	Kansas State
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
75	Brown, Lomas	T	6-4	275	3/30/63	12	Florida
62	Devlin, Mike	C	6-2	300	11/16/69	4	Iowa
64	Dexter, James	T	6-5	300	3/3/73	1	South Carolina
54	Graham, Aaron	C	6-3	295	5/22/73	1	Nebraska
66	Jonassen, Eric	T	6-5	310	8/16/68	4	Bloomsburg
73	Joyce, Matt	T	6-7	316	3/30/72	2	Richmond
70	Scott, Lance	C	6-3	285	2/15/72	2	Utah
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
37	Centers, Larry	RB	5-11	215	6/1/68	7	Stephen F. Austin
36	Christopherson, Ryan	RB	5-11	246	7/26/72	2	Wyoming
32	Johnson, LeShon	RB	5-11	195	1/15/71	3	Northern Illinois
30	McElroy, Leeland	RB	5-9	198	6/25/74	1	Texas A&M
40	Moore, Derrick	RB	6-1	227	10/13/67	4	Northeastern Oklahoma
45	Smith, Cedric	RB	5-10	222	5/27/68	7	Florida
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
82	Anderson, Stevie	WR	6-5	215	5/12/70	3	Grambling
80	Carter, Pat	TE	6-4	258	8/1/66	9	Florida State
84	Gedney, Chris	TE	6-5	260	8/9/70	4	Syracuse
89	Hayes, Jarius	TE	6-3	255	3/27/73	1	North Alabama
86	Junkin, Trey	TE	6-2	240	1/23/61	14	Louisiana Tech
87	McWilliams, Johnny	TE	6-4	261	12/14/72	1	Southern California
85	Moore, Rob	WR	6-3	205	9/27/68	7	Syracuse
81	Sanders, Frank	WR	6-1	202	2/17/73	2	Auburn
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
63	Bankston, Michael	DE	6-3	280	3/12/70	5	Sam Houston State
76	Drake, Jerry	DE	6-4	292	7/9/69	2	Hastings College
92	England, Eric	DE	6-2	283	3/25/71	3	Texas A&M
92	Price, J.C.	DE	6-2	283	1/13/73	1	Virginia Tech
79	Rice, Simeon	DE	6-5	265	2/24/74	1	Illinois
98	Swann, Eric	DT	6-5	295	8/16/70	6	Wake Technical College
94	Wilson, Bernard	DT	6-2	295	8/17/70	5	Tennessee State
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
46	Alexander, Brent	S	5-10	184	7/10/70	3	Tennessee State
28	Bennett, Tommy	S	6-1	204	2/19/73	1	UCLA
42	Lassiter, Kwamie	S	5-11	180	12/3/69	2	Kansas
47	McCleskey, J.J.	S	5-7	177	4/10/70	3	Tennessee
24	McGee, Dell	CB	5-8	180	9/7/73	1	Auburn
27	Paul, Tito	CB	6-1	195	5/24/72	2	Ohio State
35	Williams, Aeneas	CB	5-10	190	1/29/68	6	Southern
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Hill, Eric	LB	6-2	255	11/14/66	8	Louisiana State
56	Irving, Terry	LB	6-1	224	7/3/71	3	McNeese State
59	Joyner, Seth	LB	6-2	235	11/18/64	11	Texas-El Paso
52	Leasy, Wesley	LB	6-2	234	9/7/71	2	Mississippi State
57	McKinnon, Ronald	LB	5-11	230	9/20/73	1	North Alabama
95	Miller, Jamir	LB	6-4	242	11/19/73	3	UCLA
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Butler, Kevin	K	6-1	200	7/24/62	12	Georgia
10	Feagles, Jeff	P	6-1	205	3/7/66	9	Miami
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
43	Darby, Matt	S	6-2	203	11/19/68	5	UCLA
84	Dowdell, Marcus	WR	6-0	188	5/22/70	4	Tennessee State
65	Dye, Ernest*	T	6-5	333	7/15/71	4	South Carolina
83	Edwards, Anthony*	WR	5-10	193	5/26/66	7	New Mexico Highlands
44	Johnson, David*	CB	6-0	190	7/14/66	8	Kentucky
32	Johnson, LeShon	RB	6-0	201	1/15/71	3	Northern Illinois
67	Love, Duval*	G	6-4	291	6/24/63	12	UCLA
47	McCleskey, J.J.	CB	5-7	177	4/10/70	3	Tennessee
55	McDonald, Devon*	LB	6-4	240	11/8/69	4	Notre Dame
96	Ottis, Brad	DT	6-4	280	8/2/72	3	Wayne State
60	Redmon, Anthony	G	6-5	284	4/9/71	3	Auburn
74	Selby, Rob*	G	6-4	285	10/11/67	6	Auburn
78	Staysniak, Joe*	OL	6-4	302	12/8/66	7	Ohio State
68	Wolf, Joe*	T	6-6	293	12/28/66	8	Boston College

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	9	Tom Knight	DB	5-11	190	Iowa
2	42	Jake Plummer	QB	6-2	195	Arizona State
3	84	Ty Howard	DB	5-9	186	Ohio State
4	106	Chris Dishman	G	6-3	328	Nebraska
5	139	Chad Carpenter	WR	5-11	195	Washington State
6	175	Rod Brown	RB	5-11	244	North Carolina State
6	188	Tony McCombs	LB	6-2	242	Eastern Kentucky
7	212	Mark Smith	DE	6-3	293	Auburn



New coach Jim Fassel has taken the offensive in an attempt to restore the Giants' fortunes.

For the 10th time in their last 11 drafts, the Giants selected an offensive player No. 1. So you would expect them to be better than the 30th-ranked offense. If Florida receiver **Ike Hilliard** can accomplish what the others have not, he should be the Rookie of the Year.

In taking over the league's worst offense, coach **Jim Fassel** named **Dave Brown**, the NFC's lowest-rated passer, as his quarterback. The Giants think all Brown needs is time, weapons, and better coaching. Under Dan Reeves, Brown regressed, but GM George Young still believes Brown has the arm, the intelligence, and the temperament to play the most important position in one of the most demanding neighborhoods. If Brown falters, second-year prospect **Danny Kanell** of Florida State will hear cheers. Fassel hired Rod Dowhower to work with the quarterbacks, and especially to try to smooth out Brown's mechanics.

New Weapons

Though other receivers were bigger, faster, and rated higher, the Giants think Hilliard was the best in the draft because of his ability to get open and then make big plays all over the field. These are attributes that will look unfamiliar to Brown.

Hilliard is not the only change. The Giants want to see their 1995 No. 1 pick, **Tyrone Wheatley**, unseat the reliable **Rodney Hampton** as the featured runner. If Wheatley can't do it this year, fans have to wonder whether he ever will. Hampton is only 28, but he averaged just 3.3 yards per carry last year, lowest in the league among runners with more than 800 yards.

In fullback **Charles Way**, Brown has one of the league's best all-around players. Fassel added another back, Virginia's **Tiki Barber**, as a third-down threat he compares to Arizona's great Larry Centers. Clearly, the weapons in the backfield should not be lacking.

Hilliard could become Brown's go-to guy the minute he steps onto the field. Thomas Lewis, the 1994

No. 1 draftee, is the healthiest holdover receiver. He and **Chris Calloway** each had 53 catches and four touchdowns, but neither put much fear in a defense. The arrival of Hilliard and the expected return of last year's No. 2 pick, **Amani Toomer**, should create competition that will pay dividends.

Tight end **Howard Cross** and H-back **Aaron Pierce** shared playing time last season and will change roles under Fassel. Cross is a blocker; Pierce is a more complete talent who was underutilized in Reeves's offense.

Putting It on the Line

No NFC quarterback was sacked more than Brown (49). That is an indictment of an offensive line that is young and still developing. Tackles **Scott Gragg** and **Greg Bishop** were starting together for the first time. If second-year man **Roman Oben** pushes for a spot, it will be Bishop's on the left side. Left guard **Rob Zatechka**, in his third season, must beat out **Lance Smith**. Center **Brian Williams** is deserving of Pro Bowl mention and right guard **Ron Stone** was solid after arriving from Dallas.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	246.4	30
Passing	146.2	30
Rushing	100.2	21
Scoring	15.1	28
Punting	42.0	T20
Punt Returns	11.4	6
Kick Returns	19.5	28
Total Defense	315.4	14
Against Pass	206.2	15
Against Run	109.3	16
Points Allowed	18.6	10
Interceptions	22	17
Sacks	30	T25

On the Defensive

The Giants gave up fewer points than any team in the division except Dallas. The goal of new coordinator John Fox is to build on that success, improve a weak pass rush, and get something out of '96 No. 1 draft pick, **Cedric Jones**.

Jones is supposed to beat out **Chad Bratzke** at right end, but Bratzke stepped up after being given a chance. **Michael Strahan**, who tied Bratzke for the team lead with five sacks, remains strong at the other end. If Jones develops, a three-man rotation is possible. **Jamal Duff** also is back.

Inside, the addition of controversial **Christian Peter** should put added pressure on starters **Robert Harris** and **Keith Hamilton** and backup **Ray Agnew**.

Quarterback Dave Brown has new weapons at his disposal.



Jason Sehorn (top) and Phillippi Sparks (bottom) are cornerstones of the Giants' secondary.



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the key stats

Dave Brown threw for 2,412 yards and 12 TDs with 20 interceptions. **Rodney Hampton** led the club in rushing (827 yards) and scored one of the Giants' four touchdowns on the ground. The Giants did not have an individual among the league's top 40 players in first downs and had the league's worst TD percentage in the red zone (34.4).



Rodney Hampton (far left, at top) has been the Giants' top rusher.

Secondary to None

Few teams have a better pair of corners than Phillippi Sparks and Jason Sehorn, with Thomas Randolph as the nickel back. With that kind of skill in man coverage, Fox should be able to pressure quarterbacks with blitzes. Replacing Jesse Campbell at strong safety is another priority, with second-year prospect Percy Ellsworth perhaps supplanting free safety Tito Wooten, and Wooten moving to the strong side. If fifth-round choice Sam Garnes shows anything, he could enter the picture because there isn't much depth.

At linebacker, the versatile yet unheralded trio of Jessie Armstead, Corey Widmer, and Corey Miller played well. Middle man Widmer may be used more in blitzes. To challenge Miller and Widmer, the Giants added third-rounder Ryan Phillips and fourth-rounder Pete Monty.

Alive and Kicking

Although the Giants expect significant improvement out of Fassel's offense, they drafted the best punter available in Ball State's Brad Maynard. Brad Daluiso remains the kicker after a season of subpar accuracy beyond 40 yards, which is supposed to be his strength. Toomer returned two punts for touchdowns before he was injured. Barber can take over those duties and help run back kickoffs as well.

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Jim Fassel, Head Coach

John Fox, Defensive Coordinator; Jim Skipper, Offensive Coordinator/Running Backs; Dave Brazil, Defensive Quality Control; Rod Dowhower, Quarterbacks; John Dunn, Strength and Conditioning; Mike Haluchak, Linebackers; Milt Jackson, Wide Receivers; Johnnie Lynn, Defensive Backs; Larry MacDuff, Special Teams; Denny Marcini, Defensive Line; John Matsko, Offensive Line; Dick Rehbein, Tight Ends

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Brown, Dave	QB	6-5	223	2/25/70	5	Duke
13	Kanell, Danny	QB	6-3	222	11/21/73	1	Florida State
8	White, Stan	QB	6-2	218	8/14/71	3	Auburn
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
78	Bishop, Greg	T	6-5	300	5/2/71	11	Pacific
74	Gragg, Scott	T	6-8	325	2/28/72	2	Montana
68	Kline, Alan	T	6-5	290	5/25/71	2	Ohio State
72	Oben, Roman	T	6-4	297	10/9/72	1	Louisville
65	Stone, Ron	G	6-5	325	7/20/71	3	Boston College
59	Williams, Brian	C	6-5	300	6/8/66	8	Minnesota
73	Zatechka, Rob	G	6-4	315	12/1/71	2	Nebraska
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
27	Hampton, Rodney	RB	5-11	230	4/3/69	7	Georgia
33	Walker, Robert	RB	5-11	180	6/26/72	1	West Virginia
30	Way, Charles	RB	6-1	245	12/27/72	2	Virginia
28	Wheatley, Tyrone	RB	6-1	228	01/19/72	2	Michigan
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Alexander, Kevin	WR	5-9	184	1/23/75	1	Utah State
80	Calloway, Chris	WR	5-10	191	3/29/68	7	Michigan
87	Cross, Howard	TE	6-5	265	8/8/67	8	Alabama
82	Douglas, Omar	WR	5-10	182	6/3/72	3	Minnesota
81	Lewis, Thomas	WR	6-1	195	1/10/72	3	Indiana
84	Pierce, Aaron	TE	6-5	250	9/6/69	5	Washington
83	Saxton, Brian	TE	6-6	256	3/13/72	1	Boston College
89	Toomer, Amani	WR	6-2	202	9/8/74	1	Michigan
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Agnew, Ray	DE	6-3	285	12/9/67	7	North Carolina State
77	Bratzke, Chad	DE	6-4	273	9/15/71	3	Eastern Kentucky
96	Duff, Jamal	DE	6-7	271	3/11/72	2	San Diego State
95	Gilliard, Darnell	DT	6-5	305	3/24/73	1	Troy State
75	Hamilton, Keith	DE	6-6	285	5/25/71	5	Pittsburgh
97	Harris, Robert	DE	6-4	295	6/13/69	5	Southern
79	Holsey, Bernard	DT	6-2	284	12/10/73	1	Duke
94	Jones, Cedric	DE	6-4	275	4/30/74	1	Oklahoma
70	Okoli, Ramon	DT	6-5	300	3/15/73	1	Murray State
92	Strahan, Michael	DE	6-4	268	11/21/71	4	Texas Southern
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
43	Ellsworth, Percy	S	6-2	199	10/19/74	1	Virginia
41	Hamilton, Conrad	CB	5-10	184	11/5/74	1	Eastern New Mexico
23	Randolph, Thomas	CB	5-9	178	10/5/70	3	Kansas State
22	Sparks, Phillippi	CB	5-11	190	4/15/69	5	Arizona State
47	Young, Rodney	S	6-1	212	1/25/73	2	Louisiana State
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
98	Armstead, Jesse	LB	6-1	232	10/26/70	4	Miami
55	Buckley, Marcus	LB	6-3	240	2/3/71	4	Texas A&M
58	Colman, Doug	LB	6-2	252	6/4/73	1	Nebraska
52	Galyon, Scott	LB	6-2	237	3/23/74	1	Tennessee
57	Miller, Corey	LB	6-2	245	10/25/68	6	South Carolina
54	Talley, Ben	LB	6-3	245	7/14/72	2	Tennessee
90	Widmer, Corey	LB	6-3	250	12/25/68	5	Montana State
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Daluiso, Brad	K	6-2	210	12/31/67	6	UCLA
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Beamon, Willie*	CB	5-11	184	6/14/70	4	Northern Iowa
62	Davis, Scott*	G	6-3	292	1/29/70	4	Iowa
24	Douglas, Maurice*	S	5-11	210	2/12/64	11	Kentucky
20	Elias, Keith*	RB	5-9	203	2/12/64	3	Princeton
85	Kozlowski, Brian*	TE	6-3	255	10/4/70	3	Connecticut
12	Marshall, Arthur*	WR	5-11	186	4/29/69	5	Georgia
66	Reynolds, Jerry	T	6-6	315	4/2/70	3	UNLV
91	Rudolph, Coleman*	LB	6-4	262	10/22/70	4	Georgia Tech
67	Schreiber, Adam*	C	6-4	298	2/20/62	13	Texas
31	Sehorn, Jason	CB	6-2	210	4/15/71	3	Southern California
61	Smith, Lance*	G	6-3	282	1/1/63	12	LSU
29	Wooten, Tito	S	6-0	195	12/12/71	3	Northeast Louisiana

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	7	Ike Hilliard	WR	6-0	188	Florida
2	36	Tiki Barber	RB	5-8	203	Virginia
3	68	Ryan Phillips	LB	6-4	250	Idaho
3	95	Brad Maynard	P	6-0	175	Ball State
4	103	Pete Monty	LB	6-1	252	Wisconsin
5	136	Sam Garnes	DB	6-3	227	Cincinnati
6	171	Mike Cherry	QB	6-4	220	Murray State
7	208	Matt Keneley	DT	6-4	286	Southern California

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Despite the loss of several players, Green Bay will repeat as Super Bowl champions.

by Don Pierson *Chicago Tribune*

Predicted order of finish



In a division that is usually highly competitive, not only did the Green Bay Packers finish four games ahead of everyone else in the NFC Central, but they also finished first in every offensive and defensive yardage category.

Such is the effect of two-time league MVP quarterback Brett Favre, who is so far ahead of the pack that the division may not catch up until he is ready to retire.

Green Bay Packers

Staying on top while losing players such as Super Bowl MVP Desmond Howard is the challenge for coach Mike Holmgren and general manager Ron Wolf. The 49ers and Cowboys will be glad to remind them how difficult it is.

The Packers also are without wide receiver Andre Rison, tight end Keith Jackson, defensive end Sean Jones, and linebacker Wayne Simmons, but the team has shown a remarkable ability to find players who step up. Favre compensates for a lot of shortcomings. And tackle Reggie White remains the soul and strength of the defense. There are few weaknesses here.

Minnesota Vikings

Defying predictions are what Dennis Green's teams are all about. They have made the playoffs in four of Green's five seasons, using four different quarterbacks. The latest is Brad Johnson, who ended the Warren Moon experiment last season.

The health of running back Robert Smith is a constant concern. So is a defense that keeps drafting bodies for a front seven that still has trouble stopping the run. But in the end, Green usually pulls everything together.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

The Bucs got rid of that silly pirate logo and those Creamsicle-color uniforms. And what they added in offensive firepower for Trent Dilfer should enable the Bucs to get into the end zone more often. Warrick Dunn is the one draft choice in the entire division able to make a significant impact immediately. Reidel Anthony provides a speed receiver for Dilfer's big arm.

Coach Tony Dungy has a young and active front seven to create the havoc that results in turnovers, his specialty when he was with the Vikings. For years, people have warned that the Bucs are a sleeping contender. Until now, all they've done is sleep.

Chicago Bears

Rick Mirer is the Bears' fifth quarterback in coach Dave Wannstedt's five seasons. Matt Cavanaugh is a first-year offensive coordinator. Mirer arrives from Seattle as the lowest-rated passer in the league. The Bears want to run the ball but aren't sure whether Rashaan Salaam or Raymont Harris is their runner.

Defensively, they need Bryan Cox for a full season. They have a chance to turn it around in a hurry with Green Bay on the schedule twice in the first seven games. But there are a lot of questions that need answers.

Detroit Lions

The new regime of Bobby Ross will be much different from the old one of Wayne Fontes. How the players respond to a more physical training camp and regular-season practices will be a key. The Lions still have the most exciting player in football in the incomparable Barry Sanders, and they have recommitted to quarterback Scott Mitchell after the offense plunged from No. 1 to No. 20.

Defense, however, is a problem. The Lions gave up more points and more yards than any NFC Central team. They must count on youth and Ross's coaching to turn it around.

Two-time MVP Brett Favre is the leader of the Pack.



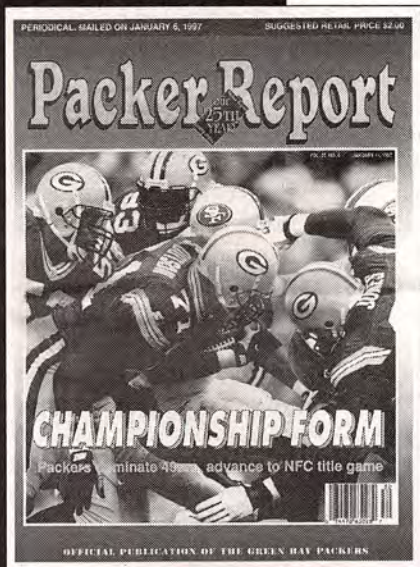
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GREEN BAY PACKERS

As long as two-time league MVP Brett Favre is around, the Packers' future is bright.

Pack man: Green Bay quarterback Brett Favre.



Gilbert Brown, Reggie White, and Santana Dotson (below, left to right) are the first line of defense for Green Bay.

With the Lombardi Trophy back on Lombardi Avenue, the Packers have more than the usual incentive to defend it. There are fans who believe it belongs to them. Vince Lombardi successfully defended championships three times. But did his Super Bowl MVP ever wander away as a free agent?

Coach **Mike Holmgren** and GM Ron Wolf knew Desmond Howard was gone the instant he broke his kickoff return in Super Bowl XXXI. It is part of the new identity of these Packers that they must learn to navigate the instability of free-agent rosters.

Hard Core

Identifying the right core players is the first order of business. The Pack's biggest priority was the biggest player, **Gilbert Brown**, whose huge contribution to the middle of a once-soft defense enabled it to improve from No. 14 to No. 1 in both yards and points allowed.

Brown re-signed and Howard resigned, off to Oakland to find his fortune and seek fame as a receiver. He wants vindication after failing as a pass catcher for three teams.

Andre Rison, who caught the first touchdown pass in the Super Bowl, is also gone. The Pack was 8-0 after claiming Rison off waivers from Jacksonville. He rescued a pass attack that was floundering in the wake of injuries to **Robert Brooks**, **Antonio Freeman**, and **Mark Chmura**. With Brooks and Freeman back, the Packers knew Rison would no longer be happy as a third wheel. While Packer fans bask in the past, the Packer brass must see to the future.

The Favre Side

As long as **Brett Favre** is around, the future is bright. The two-time league MVP has nothing left

to prove, but plenty left to play for. He will be just 28 this October, and loves competition too much to become complacent.

Favre is unquestionably the team leader. When the Packers lost Sterling Sharpe, it was Favre who first heralded Brooks. When they lost Jackie Harris, it was Favre who promoted Chmura. With tight end Keith Jackson now retired, Favre will be glad to throw to **Jeff Thomason**. With Rison and Howard gone, Favre looks forward to the emergence of **Derrick Mayes**.

Brooks recovered so fast from an anterior cruciate ligament tear that he believed he could have run a few routes in the Super Bowl. Instead, the Packers are glad to have him back strong for the start of this season to team with Freeman. Veteran **Don Beebe** also re-signed.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	345.9	5
Passing	231.1	5
Rushing	114.9	11
Scoring	28.5	1
Punting	42.4	19
Punt Returns	15.1	1
Kick Returns	22.1	T13
Total Defense	259.8	1
Against Pass	171.3	1
Against Run	88.5	4
Points Allowed	13.1	1
Interceptions	26	12
Sacks	37	T10

Solid State

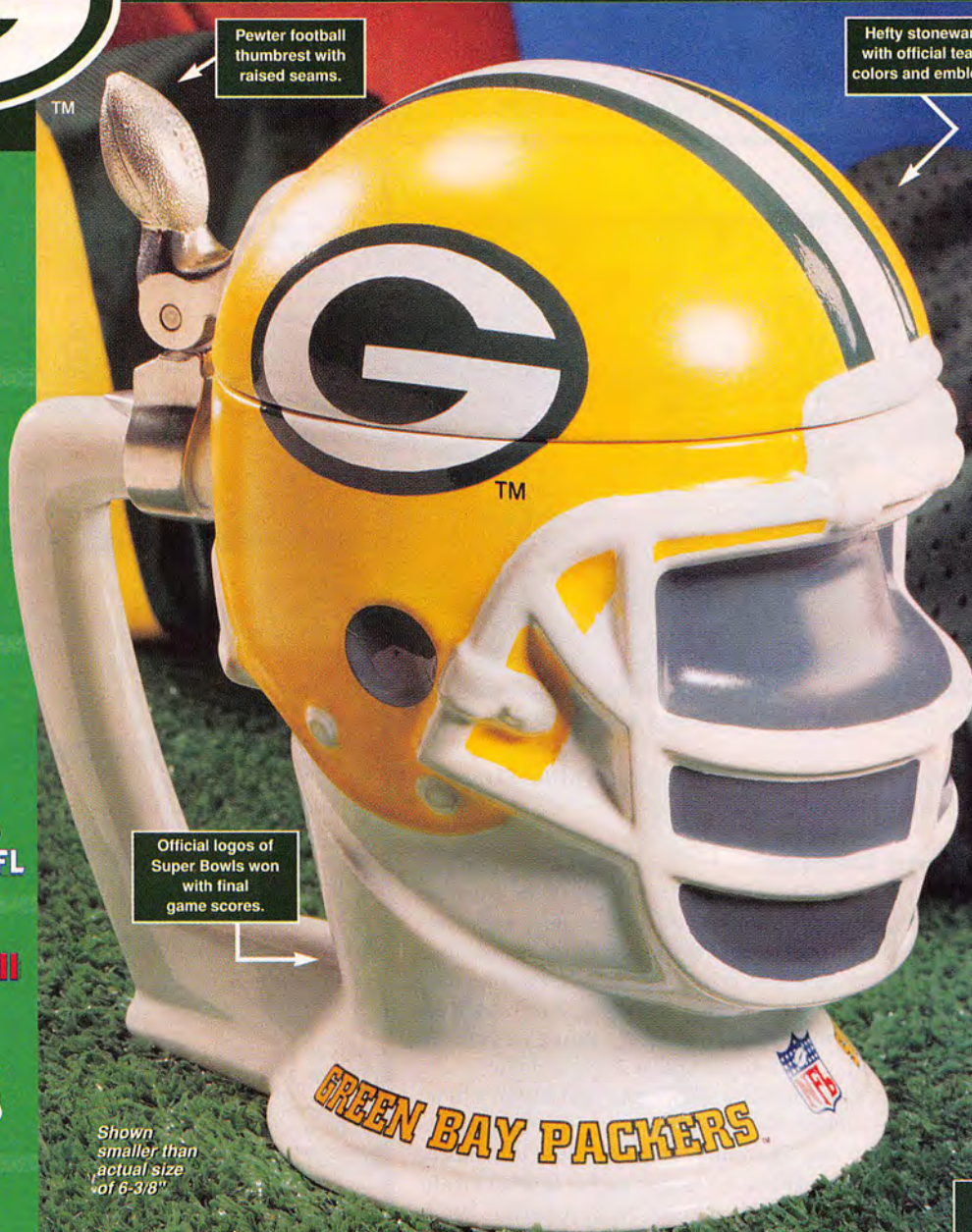
Dorsey Levens and **Edgar Bennett** are solid tailbacks who allow Holmgren the luxury of grinding out time and yardage whenever he needs them. Big fullback **William Henderson** was one of the unsung young players who came through in such a surprising way.

There will be changes on the offensive line with the hope of gaining more stability. Contrary to the usual success patterns, the Packers used four different left tackles, a dangerous proposition when protecting the back of the league's best player. **John Michels**, the club's No. 1 draft choice in 1996, gained weight and will get first shot. This year's No. 1, **Ross Verba**, also could figure in Green Bay's plans if he develops faster than Michels did. **Aaron Taylor** and **Adam Timmerman** are the guards, with **Earl Dotson** solid at right tackle. Verba can play guard, too. **Frank Winters** was re-signed at center, and the Packers will





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the key stats

The Packers were No. 1 in the NFL in total defense and pass defense. **Brett Favre** led the league in touchdown passes (39) and the NFC in pass attempts (543), completions (325), and yards (3,899). **Edgar Bennett** topped the team in rushing (899 yards), **Antonio Freeman** led in receptions (56), and **Reggie White** was first in sacks (8.5).



Green Bay tight end Mark Chmura (above) will be back in action.

welcome back last year's third-round pick, Mike Flanagan, from the injured list.

Front and Center

On Fritz Shurmur's defense, linebacker is the primary concern. **George Koonce** is coming off a knee injury and won't be ready at the start. Free agent **Wayne Simmons** is no longer welcome. That leaves **Brian Williams** as the only returning regular. The Packers expect **Bernardo Harris**, **Keith McKenzie**, and **Lamont Hollinquest** to step up. **Ron Cox** is in the wings. Fifth-rounder **Anthony Hicks** will get a chance.

Up front, it's time for **Gabe Wilkins** to replace **Sean Jones** at right end. The Packers like what they see of the 1994 fourth-round pick. **Brown** and **Santana Dotson** fortified the middle enough so that **Reggie White** no longer had to line up inside. **Darius Holland** and **Bob Kuberski** are backups inside. **White** remains a key at left end as he starts his 13th year at age 36.

Craig Newsome and **Doug Evans** are outstanding corners and **Tyrone Williams** contributed greatly as a rookie nickel back. **LeRoy Butler** is the No. 1 playmaker at strong safety and **Eugene Robinson** did everything the Packers expected when they obtained him from Seattle. Second-round draft choice **Darren Sharper** is his understudy in a backfield that includes veterans **Mike Prior** and free agent **Brad Edwards**.

Sentimental Journey

By drafting Penn State's **Brett Conway**, the Packers said good-bye to placekicker **Chris Jacke**, who was three points shy of **Don Hutson**'s career scoring record. If there was ever room for sentiment in pro football, free agency has killed it. Like **Jacke**, **Conway** is a good bad-weather kicker. Unlike **Jacke**, **Conway** has a strong kickoff leg. **Craig Hentrich** is an excellent punter. **Mayes** will get the first shot at replacing **Howard**.

GREEN BAY PACKERS

Mike Holmgren, Head Coach

Sherman Lewis, Offensive Coordinator; Fritz Shurmur, Defensive Coordinator; Larry Brooks, Defensive Line; Nolan Cromwell, Special Teams; Gil Haskell, Wide Receivers; Johnny Holland, Defensive Assistant/Quality Control; Kent Johnston, Strength and Conditioning; Jim Lind, Linebackers; Tom Lovat, Offensive Line; Andy Reid, Quarterbacks; Mike Sherman, Tight Ends; Harry Sydney, Running Backs; Bob Valesente, Defensive Backs

# QUARTERBACKS						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Favre, Brett	QB	6-2	225	10/10/69	6
18	Pederson, Doug	QB	6-3	215	1/31/68	4
7	Wachholtz, Kyle	QB	6-4	238	5/17/72	1
# OFFENSIVE LINE						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Arthur, Mike	C	6-3	290	5/7/68	6
68	Brown, Gary	T	6-4	315	6/25/71	3
66	Chung, Eugene	T	6-5	311	6/14/69	5
72	Dotson, Earl	T	6-3	315	12/17/70	4
58	Flanagan, Mike	C	6-5	290	11/10/73	1
65	Knapp, Lindsay	G	6-6	300	2/25/70	3
77	Michels, John	T	6-7	290	03/19/73	1
60	Peterson, Andrew	G	6-5	308	6/11/72	2
62	Rivera, Marco	G	6-4	295	4/26/72	1
76	Spears, Marcus	G	6-4	305	9/28/71	3
73	Taylor, Aaron	G	6-4	305	11/14/72	2
64	Timmerman, Adam	G	6-4	295	8/14/71	2
63	Wilkinson, Bruce	T	6-5	305	7/28/64	10
52	Winters, Frank	C	6-3	295	1/23/64	10
# RUNNING BACKS						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
34	Bennett, Edgar	RB	6-1	217	2/15/69	5
43	Bostic, James	RB	5-11	225	3/13/72	3
44	Darkins, Chris	RB	6-1	215	4/30/74	1
30	Henderson, William	RB	6-1	248	02/19/71	2
32	Jervy, Travis	RB	5-11	225	5/5/72	2
38	Satterfield, Brian	RB	6-1	225	12/22/69	2
# RECEIVERS						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
82	Beebe, Don	WR	5-11	183	12/18/64	8
87	Brooks, Robert	WR	6-1	180	6/23/70	5
89	Chmura, Mark	TE	6-5	250	2/22/69	4
86	Freeman, Antonio	WR	6-1	190	5/27/72	2
88	Le Bel, Harper	TE	6-4	255	7/14/63	8
80	Mayes, Derrick	WR	6-1	200	1/28/74	1
83	Pinkney, Lovell	WR	6-4	255	8/18/72	2
18	Schroeder, Bill	WR	6-2	198	1/9/71	3
83	Thomason, Jeff	TE	6-4	250	12/30/69	5
20	Yarborough, Ryan	WR	6-2	195	4/26/71	3
# DEFENSIVE LINE						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Brown, Gilbert	NT	6-2	325	2/22/71	4
91	Clavette, Shannon	DE	6-2	287	10/12/73	2
71	Dotson, Santana	DT	6-5	285	12/19/69	5
90	Holland, Darius	DT	6-4	310	11/10/73	2
94	Kuberski, Bob	NT	6-4	295	4/5/71	2
94	Scott, Walter	DE	6-3	285	5/18/73	1
95	Thompson, Mike	DT	6-4	284	12/22/72	2
92	White, Reggie	DE	6-5	300	12/19/61	12
98	Wilkins, Gabe	DT	6-4	305	9/1/71	3
# DEFENSIVE BACKS						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
36	Butler, LeRoy	S	6-1	200	07/19/68	7
23	Dorsett, Matthew	CB	5-11	190	8/23/73	2
27	Edwards, Brad	S	6-2	208	3/22/66	9
33	Evans, Doug	CB	6-1	190	5/13/70	4
40	Hayes, Chris	S	5-11	200	5/7/72	1
28	Mullen, Roderick	S	6-1	204	12/5/72	2
21	Newsome, Craig	CB	5-11	190	8/10/71	2
39	Prior, Mike	S	6-1	208	11/14/63	12
41	Robinson, Eugene	S	6-1	195	5/28/63	12
37	Williams, Tyrone	CB	5-11	195	5/31/73	1
# LINEBACKERS						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
59	Clark, Reggie	LB	6-2	238	10/17/67	3
54	Cox, Ron	LB	6-2	235	3/29/68	7
56	Fox, Dion	LB	6-3	250	6/11/71	3
55	Harris, Bernardo	LB	6-2	243	10/15/71	2
57	Jefferson, Kevin	LB	6-2	232	1/14/74	3
53	Koonce, George	LB	6-1	243	10/15/68	5
95	McKenzie, Keith	LB	6-2	242	10/17/73	1
51	Williams, Brian	LB	6-1	235	12/17/72	2
# KICKERS						
		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Hentrich, Craig	P	6-3	200	5/18/71	3
# FREE AGENTS						
		POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.
16	Carpenter, Rob*	WR	6-2	190	8/1/68	5
67	Dellenbach, Jeff*	C	6-6	300	2/14/63	12
56	Hollinquest, Lamont	LB	6-3	243	10/24/70	3
13	Jacke, Chris*	K	6-0	205	3/12/66	8
27	Jones, Calvin	RB	5-11	205	11/27/70	3
25	Levens, Dorsey	RB	6-1	235	5/21/70	3
85	Mickens, Terry	WR	6-0	198	2/21/71	3
59	Simmons, Wayne*	LB	6-2	248	12/15/69	4

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	30	Ross Verba	T	6-4	299	Iowa
2	60	Darren Sharper	DB	6-2	206	William & Mary
3	90	Brett Conway	K	6-2	191	Penn State
4	126	Jermaine Smith	DT	6-3	289	Georgia
5	160	Anthony Hicks	LB	6-1	242	Arkansas
7	213	Chris Miller	WR	5-10	192	Southern California
7	231	Jerald Sowell	RB	6-0	248	Tulane
7	240	Ronnie McAda	QB	6-3	205	Army

MINNESOTA VIKINGS



It is imperative that the Vikings address their inability to run and to stop the run.



John Randle
(above) puts
some bite in the
Viking defense.

Running and stopping the run were the Vikings' problems last year. Somehow, they overcame trouble in the basic elements to advance to the playoffs for the fourth time in coach **Dennis Green's** five years.

The Vikings addressed those two areas. They re-signed all-pro guard **Randall McDaniel** and brought back off-injured running back **Robert Smith** and late-season acquisition **Leroy Hoard**. They spent their first five picks on defense, the fourth straight draft in which the club has gone heavy for defense, mainly because front-four stalwarts such as **Chris Doleman**, **Henry Thomas**, and **Roy Barker** have chosen to play elsewhere.

Encore Performances

If the Vikings don't improve on their No. 24 ranking in both running and stopping the run, it won't matter what kind of encore season they get from quarterback **Brad Johnson**. After five years in the wings, Johnson took over the starting job, running **Warren Moon** out of town and securing his future with a four-year, \$15.5 million contract. He finished third in passer ratings in only eight starts.

The Vikings signed **Randall Cunningham** as a backup. Cunningham knows he has no chance to compete for the starting job, but he still demonstrates the athleticism that could turn an emergency role into a winning one.

Cris Carter
(below) catches
on in Minnesota.

The health of **Smith** is key to the offense. Through six games, he was third in the NFL with 560 yards rushing while the Vikings boasted the most balanced attack they ever had under **Green**. But a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee on October 28 shelved **Smith** for the fourth time in four seasons. The addition of **Hoard** down the stretch saved them. The Vikings also hope to re-sign third-down specialist **Amp Lee**.

Deep Threat

Adding 350-pound guard **David Dixon** and blocking tight end **Hunter Goodwin** at the same time **Hoard** arrived put the rushing attack back on track. It also allowed **Johnson** some leeway in getting the ball to **Cris Carter** and **Jake Reed**, the first pair of receivers in NFL history to each have three 1,000-yard seasons in a row. With **Reed** as a deep threat and **Carter** as a threat over the middle, on the sidelines, and in the end zone, **Johnson** has the luxury of two excellent targets. **Carter's** uncanny ability to stretch for balls widens the field on sideline routes. Missing from the Viking passing attack is a deep-threat tight end, because **Goodwin** is a former tackle. But the Vikings use three-receiver sets to advantage with **David Palmer** or **Qadry Ismail**.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	325.3	12
Passing	228.6	8
Rushing	96.6	24
Scoring	18.6	23
Punting	40.2	29
Punt Returns	9.4	T18
Kick Returns	18.5	30
Total Defense	317.9	16
Against Pass	195.1	9
Against Run	122.9	24
Points Allowed	19.7	15
Interceptions	22	T7
Sacks	43	6

Block and Tackle

McDaniel is one of the league's great blockers and the linchpin of the line, which is why the club was willing to pay him franchise player money (over \$3 million a year) to keep him. **McDaniel** is one of the NFL's smaller offensive linemen, but still one of the best. He has started every game for seven years, and his durability is wearing off on young left tackle **Todd Steussie**, who hasn't missed a start in his three years as a pro. If **Dixon** stays at right guard, his 350 pounds is nearly matched by right tackle **Korey Stringer**.

On defense, the team continues to try to complement tackle **John Randle**. Despite double teams, **Randle** led the club in sacks (11.5) and forced four fumbles. The Vikings spent much of their off-season pursuing a tackle mate, but were turned down by **Ray Seals** and **Reuben Davis**. They hope third-year prospect **Jason Fisk** or second-year man **James Manley** steps up. They also drafted **Tony Williams**.

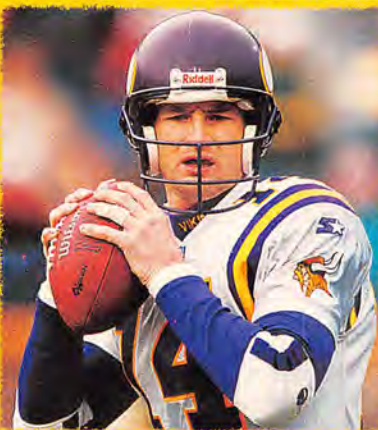


the key stats

Brad Johnson had the highest fourth-quarter quarterback rating (99.7) in the NFC. Overall, he was No. 3 in the league in passing, completing 62.7 percent for 2,258 yards and 17 touchdowns. Viking leaders: **Scott Sisson** (scoring, 96 points), **Robert Smith** (rushing, 692 yards), **Cris Carter** (receptions, 96), **Orlando Thomas** (interceptions, 5).

Emerging Talent

The improvement of **Fernando Smith** at left end was a welcome development. Smith went from 2.5 sacks and 16 tackles in his first two years to 9.5 sacks and 79 tackles as a full-time starter. The Vikings would like to see similar improvement from their 1995 No. 1 draft pick, **Derrick Alexander**, on the right side, where their 1996 No. 1 draft pick, **Duane Clemons**, also figures after a season of watching.



Receiver Jake Reed (at left) is a deep threat for quarterback Brad Johnson (above), who had a surprisingly successful season for the Vikings.

Dwayne Rudd, the 1997 No. 1 pick, was somewhat of a surprise because the Vikings were set at linebacker with the return of **Ed McDaniel** from a knee injury. But Rudd and Clemons have the kind of big-play ability that coordinator **Foge Fazio** should be able to incorporate into any defense. McDaniel was the team's leading tackler before he got hurt and missed all of last season. If he comes back strong, he will enable **Dixon Edwards** to move from the weak to the strong side, with big playmaker **Jeff Brady** manning the middle.

Safety First

In the second and fourth rounds, the Vikings drafted safety **Torrian Gray** and safety/corner **Antonio Banks** to provide protection in a thin area. Free safety **Orlando Thomas** suffered a knee injury in the playoff loss to Dallas. The strong safety is **Robert Griffith** and the corners are **Corey Fuller** and **Dwayne Washington**.

Palmer returned one punt for a touchdown and still averaged less than 10 yards. Ismail was the lowest-ranked kick-off returner in the NFL. **Scott Sisson** made only three of seven field goals beyond 40 yards. **Mitch Berger** placed punts fairly well but finished down the line in the league in net average per kick.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Dennis Green, Head Coach

Brian Billick, Offensive Coordinator; Foge Fazio, Defensive Coordinator; Dave Atkins, Tight Ends; Jeff Friday, Assistant Strength and Conditioning; Carl Hargrave, Running Backs; John Lepra, Defensive Line; Chip Myers, Wide Receivers; Tom Olivadotti, Inside Linebackers; Ray Sherman, Quarterbacks; Richard Solomon, Defensive Backs; Mike Tice, Offensive Line; Trent Walters, Outside Linebackers; Steve Wetzel, Strength and Conditioning; Gary Zauner, Special Teams

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Cunningham, Randall	QB	6-4	205	3/27/63	12	UNLV
14	Johnson, Brad	QB	6-5	223	9/13/68	3	Florida State
6	Walker, Jay	QB	6-3	230	1/24/72	3	Howard
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
62	Christy, Jeff	C	6-3	284	2/3/69	4	Pittsburgh
76	Dill, Scott	T	6-5	295	4/5/66	9	Memphis
71	Dixon, David	G	6-5	359	1/5/69	3	Arizona State
61	Lindsay, Everett	G	6-4	305	9/18/70	4	Mississippi
64	McDaniel, Randall	G	6-3	277	12/19/64	9	Arizona State
68	Morris, Mike	C	6-5	275	2/22/61	10	Northeast Missouri St
73	Steussie, Todd	T	6-6	313	12/1/70	3	California
77	Stringer, Korey	T	6-4	339	5/8/74	2	Ohio State
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
29	Evans, Charles	RB	6-1	240	4/16/67	4	Clark-Atlanta
44	Hoard, Leroy	RB	5-11	225	5/15/68	7	Michigan
33	Morrow, Harold	RB	5-11	210	2/24/73	1	Auburn
26	Smith, Robert	RB	6-2	212	3/4/72	4	Ohio State
28	Stewart, James	RB	6-2	238	12/8/71	2	Miami
21	Williams, Moe	RB	6-1	203	7/26/74	1	Kentucky
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
84	Bland, Tony	WR	6-3	210	12/12/72	1	Florida A&M
80	Carter, Cris	WR	6-3	206	11/25/65	10	Ohio State
85	DeLong, Greg	TE	6-4	245	4/3/73	2	North Carolina
87	Goodwin, Hunter	TE	6-5	277	10/10/72	1	Texas A&M
89	Jordan, Andrew	TE	6-4	258	6/21/72	3	Western Carolina
86	Reed, Jake	WR	6-3	216	9/28/67	6	Grambling
81	Walsh, Chris	WR	6-1	194	12/12/68	5	Stanford
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
90	Alexander, Derrick	DE	6-4	265	11/3/73	2	Florida State
72	Fisk, Jason	DT	6-3	284	9/4/72	2	Stanford
75	Manley, James	DT	6-2	302	7/11/74	1	Vanderbilt
93	Randle, John	DT	6-1	277	12/12/67	7	Texas A&M-Kingsville
95	Smith, Fernando	DE	6-6	283	8/2/71	3	Jackson State
98	Tuaolo, Esera	DT	6-2	276	7/11/68	6	Oregon State
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
42	Barnett, Harlon	S	5-11	203	1/2/67	7	Michigan State
38	Ellis, Kwame	CB	5-10	188	2/27/74	1	Stanford
27	Fuller, Corey	CB	5-10	198	5/11/71	2	Florida State
35	Johnson, Chris	S	6-1	205	8/7/71	2	San Diego State
43	Thomas, Orlando	S	6-1	210	10/21/72	2	Southwestern Louisiana
20	Washington, Dewayne	CB	5-11	191	12/27/72	3	North Carolina State
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
56	Berchich, Pete	LB	6-1	237	12/23/71	2	Notre Dame
50	Brady, Jeff	LB	6-1	238	11/9/68	6	Kentucky
54	Briggs, Greg	LB	6-3	212	10/1/68	2	Texas Southern
92	Clemons, Duane	LB	6-5	261	5/23/74	1	California
59	Edwards, Dixon	LB	6-1	225	3/25/68	6	Michigan State
51	Hanks, Ben	LB	6-2	223	7/31/72	1	Florida
58	McDaniel, Ed	LB	5-11	230	2/23/69	5	Clemson
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Berger, Mitch	P	6-2	231	6/24/72	3	Colorado
5	Davis, Greg	K	6-1	205	10/29/65	10	The Citadel
9	Sisson, Scott	K	6-1	197	7/21/71	4	Georgia Tech
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
52	Brown, Richard*	LB	6-3	237	9/21/65	9	San Diego State
83	Frisch, David*	TE	6-7	260	6/22/70	5	Colorado State
54	Garnett, Dave*	LB	6-2	219	12/6/70	4	Stanford
94	Goff, Robert*	DT	6-3	267	10/2/65	10	Auburn
24	Griffith, Robert	S	5-11	189	11/30/70	4	San Diego State
91	Harrison, Martin*	DE	6-5	251	9/20/67	7	Washington
82	Ismail, Qadry*	WR	6-0	200	11/8/70	5	Syracuse
25	Jackson, Alfred*	CB	6-0	186	7/10/67	7	San Diego State
32	Lee, Amp*	RB	5-11	206	10/1/71	6	Florida State
22	Palmer, David	WR	5-8	169	11/19/72	4	Alabama
40	Prior, Anthony*	CB	5-11	185	3/27/70	4	Washington State
55	Talley, Darryl*	LB	6-4	225	7/10/60	15	West Virginia
37	Vanhorse, Sean*	CB	5-10	177	7/22/68	8	Howard

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	20	Dwayne Rudd	LB	6-2	241	Alabama
2	49	Torrian Gray	DB	6-0	200	Virginia Tech
3	78	Stalin Colinet	DE	6-6	288	Boston College
4	113	Antonio Banks	DB	5-10	195	Virginia Tech
5	151	Tony Williams	DT	6-5	292	Memphis
6	183	Robert Tate	WR	5-10	185	Cincinnati
7	220	Artie Ulmer	LB	6-2	239	Valdosta State
7	235	Matthew Hatchette	WR	6-2	195	Langston

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS



There is genuine hope for the Bucs this year, accompanied by good reasons for optimism.

Finally, the Buccaneers are getting serious. After their 14th losing season in a row, they made the most noticeable changes of any team in the league during the off-season. They changed their colors and logo, ordering the orange pirate to walk the plank. The new colors are red, black, and white. The silver helmet is adorned with a skull and swords as crossbones instead of the plumed pirate with a sword in his teeth. Said former coach John McKay, "If he's the guy who was in charge of losing, let's get rid of him."

Heady Times

He must have had accomplices. No franchise suffers through such consistent ineptitude without a conspiracy to blame. But if the Bucs can change more than their colors, credit second-year coach **Tony Dungy**. After a 1-8 start in his initial season, Dungy guided his Bucs to a heady 5-2 finish, sending a wave of optimism not seen since the end of 1994 and the beginning of '95, when

Sam Wyche's teams went 9-3. That never amounted to anything. This time, however, there is genuine hope accompanied by reasons for optimism. The Bucs are better than they were a year ago. Dungy improved the defense from No. 27 in the league to No. 11, the team's highest ranking since 1991.

Scoring Threats

Two rookies, **Warrick Dunn** and **Reidel Anthony**, will give them a chance to score. The Bucs finished last in the league in scoring. Quarterback **Trent Dilfer** had no threats around him after running back **Errict Rhett** (539 yards) held out and receiver **Horace Copeland** went down for the year during the preseason. In the NFC Central, no other team drafted a running back or a receiver in early rounds. No other team in the league added both a runner and receiver so high.

The Bucs finished last year with an offensive threat in rookie fullback **Mike Alstott**, who led the team in receiving with 65 catches for 557 yards and became a Pro Bowl alternate. Dungy and offensive

coordinator **Mike Shula** plan to start this season with **Dunn** and **Anthony** playing key roles. To protect themselves at running back, the Bucs re-signed **Reggie Brooks**, but **Dunn** figures to see plenty of action in all kinds of situations even if his size prevents him from playing every down.

On the Defensive

Only seven teams gave up fewer points than **Dungy's** defense, and all of them enjoyed considerably more offensive help. It's hard to play aggressive defense when your offense is scoring less than two touchdowns a game. Second-year tackle **Warren Sapp** recorded nine sacks and became a leader. End **Regan Upshaw** started every game as a rookie and tackle **Marcus Jones** started three.

The other end is **Chidi Ahanotu**. The team's top tackler was 1995 first-round linebacker **Derrick Brooks**. When **Eric Curry**, the '93 No. 1 choice, is in the lineup, the Bucs have four No. 1 picks on their line and a No. 1 at linebacker.

At middle linebacker is Pro Bowler **Hardy Nickerson**. The Bucs lost free-agent linebacker **Lonnie Marts** to Houston after an outstanding year and will try to replace him with ex-Saint and ex-Seahawk **Rufus Porter**, who played under defensive coordinator **Monte Kiffin** and knows the system. Fourth-round draft choice **Alshermond Singleton** should get a look at linebacker as well.

Mike Alstott (below) paid big dividends for the Bucs.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	269.8	28
Passing	170.4	29
Rushing	99.3	22
Scoring	13.8	30
Punting	42.5	18
Punt Returns	11.7	5
Kick Returns	23.4	8
Total Defense	300.9	11
Against Pass	182.8	4
Against Run	118.1	22
Points Allowed	18.3	18
Interceptions	17	T16
Sacks	35	T15

Hardy Nickerson (above) is a Pro Bowl linebacker for Tampa Bay.



the key stats

Tampa Bay was the lowest-scoring team in the NFL (221 points). **Michael Husted** led the Bucs in scoring (93 points). **Trent Dilfer** passed for 2,859 yards and 12 touchdowns with 19 interceptions. Free-agent linebacker **Rufus Porter** had 37 career sacks with Seattle. The Bucs had a different leading receiver in each of their first six games in '96.



Running back Errict Rhett (at left) and quarterback Trent Dilfer (above) will have additional offensive support with the Bucs this season.

Offensive Incentive

The Bucs are young in the secondary, with '96 third-round cornerback **Donnie Abraham** leading them in interceptions (5). Free safety **Melvin Johnson** and strong safety **John Lynch** played well. This year's third-round corner, **Ronde Barber**, has a chance to start in place of **Martin Mayhew**.

The defense gave up only 18 points a game, plenty of incentive for Dilfer and his offense. After throwing 10 interceptions and only one touchdown pass in his first five games, Dilfer threw 11 touchdowns and nine interceptions the rest of the way, even though his wide receivers scared no one. If Copeland can recover and Anthony pans out, they will start the season, with **Courtney Hawkins** or **Robb Thomas** as the third receiver. With more speed on the outside, tight end **Jackie Harris** might become more consistently effective.

Steve Walsh joined the club as Dilfer's backup, rejoining Shula. When they were in Chicago together, in 1994, Walsh quarterbacked the Bears into the playoffs.

The Big Bucs

Re-signing their great left tackle **Paul Gruber** was a priority during the off-season. Drafting huge right tackle **Jerry Wunsch** in the second round now gives the Bucs excellent bookends. It also may allow second-year tackle **Jason Odom** to move to guard, where **Jim Pyne** and **Ian Beckles** were the starters last year. **Tony Mayberry** is a very good center, and third-rounder **Frank Middleton** will compete at guard.

The rise of the Bucs paralleled the late-season discovery of **Karl Williams**, a free-agent rookie who averaged 27.4 yards on only 14 kickoff returns and a whopping 21.1 yards on just 13 punt returns. Punter **Tommy Barnhardt** is coming off a very good year, and placekicker **Michael Husted** has an exceptionally strong leg.

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

Tony Dungy, Head Coach

Herman Edwards, Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Backs; Monte Kiffin, Defensive Coordinator; Mike Shula, Offensive Coordinator; Clyde Christensen, Tight Ends; Chris Foerster, Offensive Line; Joe Marciano, Special Teams; Mark Asanovich, Strength and Conditioning; Rod Marinelli, Defensive Line; Tony Nathan, Running Backs; Kevin O'Dea, Defensive Assistant; Ricky Thomas, Offensive Assistant; Lovie Smith, Linebackers; Charlie Williams, Wide Receivers

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Differ, Trent	QB	6-4	235	3/13/72	3	Fresno State
13	Milanovich, Scott	QB	6-3	227	1/29/73	1	Maryland
4	Walsh, Steve	QB	6-3	205	12/1/66	8	Miami
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
64	Diaz, Jorge	G	6-4	295	11/15/73	1	Texas A&M-Kingsville
74	Dittman, Seth	T	6-7	300	7/23/72	2	Stanford
65	Dogins, Kevin	C	6-1	290	12/7/72	1	Texas A&M-Kingsville
74	Gruber, Paul	T	6-5	296	2/24/65	9	Wisconsin
67	Ingram, Steve	T	6-4	320	5/8/71	2	Maryland
79	Love, Sean	G	6-3	304	9/6/68	4	Penn State
61	Mayberry, Tony	C	6-4	292	12/8/67	7	Wake Forest
70	Odom, Jason	T	6-5	296	3/31/74	1	Florida
69	Pierson, Pete	T	6-5	295	2/4/71	3	Washington
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
40	Alstott, Mike	RB	6-1	244	12/21/73	1	Purdue
41	Brooks, Reggie	RB	5-8	209	01/19/71	4	Notre Dame
37	Ellison, Jerry	RB	5-10	204	12/20/71	2	Tennessee-Chattanooga
32	Rhett, Errict	RB	5-11	211	12/11/70	3	Florida
36	Ross, Dominique	RB	6-1	203	1/12/72	2	Valdosta State
33	Staten, Robert	RB	5-11	240	11/23/69	1	Jackson State
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
88	Copeland, Horace	WR	6-3	202	1/2/71	4	Miami
45	Davis, John	TE	6-4	257	5/14/73	2	Emporia State
84	Greene, Tracy	TE	6-5	270	11/5/72	3	Grambling
80	Harper, Alvin	WR	6-4	218	7/6/68	6	Tennessee
81	Harris, Jackie	TE	6-4	246	1/4/68	7	Northeast Louisiana
89	Marshall, Marvin	WR	5-10	162	6/21/72	2	South Carolina State
83	Moore, Dave	TE	6-2	248	11/11/69	5	Pittsburgh
87	Silvan, Nilo	WR	5-9	184	10/2/73	1	Tennessee
82	Tate, Willy	TE	6-3	243	9/7/72	1	Oregon
84	Thomas, Robb	WR	5-11	175	3/29/66	8	Oregon State
86	Williams, Karl	WR	5-10	163	4/10/71	1	Texas A&M-Kingsville
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
72	Ahanotu, Chidi	DE	6-2	283	10/11/70	4	California
77	Culpepper, Brad	DT	6-1	275	5/8/69	5	Florida
75	Curry, Eric	DE	6-5	270	2/3/70	4	Alabama
97	Jackson, Tyoka	DE	6-2	266	11/22/71	3	Penn State
78	Jones, Marcus	DT	6-6	282	8/15/73	1	North Carolina
90	Maniecki, Jason	DT	6-4	295	8/15/72	1	Wisconsin
94	McKenzie, Rich	DE	6-2	265	4/15/71	2	Penn State
99	Sapp, Warren	DE	6-2	288	12/19/72	2	Miami
73	Upshaw, Regan	DE	6-4	264	8/12/75	1	California
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Abraham, Donnie	CB	5-10	181	10/8/73	1	East Tennessee State
27	Austin, Eric	S	5-11	217	6/9/73	1	Jackson State
23	Bouie, Tony	S	5-10	193	8/7/72	2	Arizona
39	Dimry, Charles	CB	6-1	176	1/31/66	9	UNLV
29	Gant, Kenneth	S	5-11	203	4/18/67	7	Albany State
24	Gayle, Rashid	CB	5-8	174	4/16/74	1	Boise State
25	Johnson, Melvin	S	6-1	198	4/15/72	2	Kentucky
47	Lynch, John	S	6-2	210	9/25/71	4	Stanford
22	Mincy, Charles	S	5-11	197	12/16/69	5	Washington
28	Rusk, Reggie	CB	5-10	182	10/19/72	1	Kentucky
38	Scott, Todd	S	5-11	205	1/23/68	6	Southwestern Louisiana
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
55	Brooks, Derrick	LB	6-1	231	4/18/73	2	Florida State
50	Gooch, Jeff	LB	5-11	218	10/31/74	1	Austin Peay
57	Jones, LaCurtis	LB	6-1	200	6/23/72	1	Baylor
56	Nickerson, Hardy	LB	6-2	233	9/1/65	10	California
59	Porter, Rufus	LB	6-1	230	5/18/65	9	Southern
52	Rouse, Wardell	LB	6-2	235	6/9/72	2	Clemson
94	White, Steve	LB	6-2	246	10/25/73	1	Tennessee
58	Williams, Mark	LB	6-3	242	5/17/71	3	Ohio State
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
6	Barnhardt, Tommy	P	6-2	207	6/11/63	10	North Carolina
5	Husted, Michael	K	6-1	195	6/16/70	4	Virginia
9	Nittmo, Bjorn	K	5-11	179	7/26/66	8	Appalachian State
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
62	Beckles, Ian*	G	6-1	304	7/20/67	7	Indiana
85	Hawkins, Courtney	WR	5-9	183	12/12/69	5	Michigan State
45	Legette, Tyrone*	CB	5-9	177	2/15/70	5	Nebraska
35	Mayhew, Martin*	CB	5-8	178	10/8/65	9	Florida State
60	Pyne, Jim	G	6-2	290	11/23/71	3	Virginia Tech
79	Riesenberg, Doug*	T	6-5	285	7/22/65	10	California
11	Weldon, Casey*	QB	6-1	206	2/3/69	5	Florida State

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

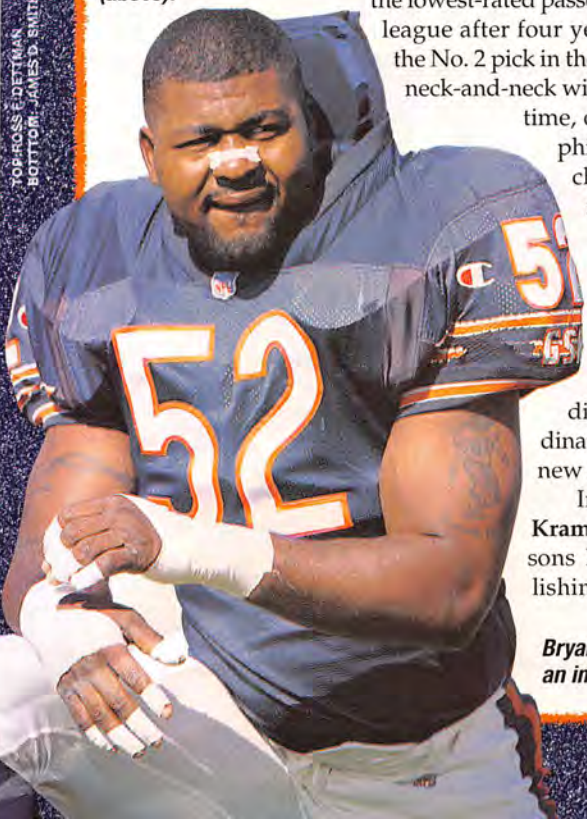
RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	12	Warrick Dunn	RB	5-8	176	Florida State
1	16	Reidel Anthony	WR	5-11	183	Florida
2	37	Jerry Wunsch	T	6-6	327	Wisconsin
3	63	Frank Middleton	G	6-3	324	Arizona
3	66	Ronde Barber	DB	5-10	185	Virginia
4	128	Alsharmond Singleton	LB	6-2	224	Temple
5	137	Patrick Hape	TE	6-4	253	Alabama
6	169	Al Harris	DB	6-4	253	Texas A&M-Kingsville
6	197	Nigee Carter	WR	6-1	176	Michigan State
7	209	Anthony DeGrate	OT	6-1	333	Stephen F. Austin



Rick Mirer's skills as a mobile and resourceful passer remain intact. Or so the Bears hope.



Chicago hopes to soar with Rashaan Salaam (above).



Bryan Cox (at left) has made an impact on the Bears.

Injuries hit every team. Nobody likes to use them as an excuse. But the Bears had so many injuries last season it wasn't funny. When they fired their trainer of 30 years, Fred Caito, it put a somber exclamation point on a very unfunny year.

In coach Dave Wannstedt's four seasons, the Bears have been led by four different quarterbacks, four different rushers, four different sack leaders, and three different receivers. Such turnover is unmatched elsewhere in the league. Injury was the main factor last year: In 13 of their 16 games, Wannstedt watched a player get hurt badly enough that it kept him out of subsequent games.

Running in circles is no way to catch the Packers, who have pummeled the Bears six straight times. To add insult to injury, the Bears must face their ancient archrivals in the Monday night season opener in Green Bay and again in Chicago only six weeks later. Will they be ready?

Starting Over

Rick Mirer is Wannstedt's fifth quarterback in five years. His arrival from Seattle cost the Bears a No. 1 draft choice. Nobody second-guessed the need, though Mirer was the lowest-rated passer in the

league after four years of frustration. As the No. 2 pick in the 1993 draft, Mirer was neck-and-neck with Drew Bledsoe at the time, only to suffer through philosophy and coaching changes. His skills as a mobile and resourceful passer remain intact. Or so the Bears hope.

Wannstedt hired Matt Cavanaugh, ex-quarterbacks coach for the 49ers and Cardinals, as offensive coordinator to tutor Mirer in the new system.

Injuries in two of Erik Kramer's three Chicago seasons kept him from establishing himself, but didn't

keep him from re-signing. Kramer still believes this is his team, and thinks he can beat out Mirer. How much of a chance he gets will be one of the decisions Wannstedt must make. Mirer needs his confidence rebuilt, and Kramer's presence isn't likely to help.

Backfield in Motion

Another major decision facing Wannstedt surrounds the backfield, where he insists tailbacks Rashaan Salaam and Raymont Harris will play at the same time, leaving fullback Tony Carter wondering who will block. When Salaam and Harris got hurt on successive plays last preseason, it was

an omen of things to come, and one reason the Bears used a fourth-round draft choice on Northwestern tailback, Darnell Autry, further crowding the issue.

The Bears envision Salaam as their go-to tailback and Harris as their all-purpose threat. But they were not able to play both at the same time last year until the final week, and Salaam and Harris are skeptical about sharing the field this year. Getting rid of third-down back Robert Green leaves a void the Bears hope either Harris or Autry can fill. Wannstedt also has envisioned free-

agent Tyrone Hughes as a third-down back, a position he has never played.

Countermoves

Wannstedt vows to run because he feels it is the best way for him to slow down the high-powered passing attacks of the Packers, Lions, and Vikings. That's why the Bears traded up in the second round to take tight end John Allred, whom they felt was the best combination receiver/blocker at that position in the draft. Before, they used Keith Jennings when running and Ryan Wetnight when passing. Allred should provide both.

The Bears have a legitimate deep threat in Curtis Conway, who should be averaging more than 13 yards a catch. Elevating second-year man Bobby Engram in place of Michael Timpson and adding one of Mirer's Seattle buddies, Ricky Proehl, should take some pressure off Conway.

Up Front

The Bears expect changes in an offensive line that has been a strength. Tackles Andy Heck and

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	306.6	21
Passing	199.1	19
Rushing	107.5	16
Scoring	17.7	26
Punting	44.8	T5
Punt Returns	9.1	20
Kick Returns	23.9	T5
Total Defense	305.3	12
Against Pass	204.2	14
Against Run	101.1	11
Points Allowed	19.1	12
Interceptions	17	T16
Sacks	30	T25

the key stats

Rick Mirer set NFL rookie records in 1993 in pass attempts (486), completions (274), and yards (2,833), but he threw for just 1,546 yards and 5 touchdowns with 12 interceptions in 1996. He will be throwing to former Seattle teammate **Ricky Proehl** (315 career catches) and **Curtis Conway**, who led the Bears with 81 receptions last season.

James Williams are pushing for Pro Bowl recognition. **Todd Perry** is solid at left guard. Center **Jerry Fontenot** is likely to be bumped by second-year guard **Chris Villarrial**, and either **Todd Burger** or third-rounder **Bob Sapp** will play right guard.

Alonzo Spellman (8 sacks) and **Carl Simpson** anchor the right side of the defensive line, with **Paul Grasmanis** and **John Thierry** expected to start on the left. Wannstedt expects big things from **Theirry**, the 1994 No. 1 draft choice.

Coping With Injuries

A thumb injury cost new linebacker/pass rusher **Bryan Cox** the last seven games just as he was beginning to make the plays the Bears expected after they signed him as a free agent. His dual role is more important this year as tackles **Jim Flanigan** and **Chris Zorich** are coming off surgeries and end **Al Fontenot** defected to Indianapolis.

Untested outside linebackers **Sean Harris** and **Barry Minter** are expected to replace free agents **Vinson Smith** and **Joe Cain** at the thinnest position on the defense. **Anthony Peterson** from the 49ers is a special-teams tackler who could help. Free-agent cornerback **Tom Carter** from the Redskins and second-year man **Walt Harris** must provide the tight coverage for coordinator **Bob Slowik** to turn others loose. Strong safety **Marty Carter** led the team in tackles and **Anthony Marshall** will push **Mark Carrier** at free safety.

Ex-Raider **Jeff Jaeger** rescued the place-kicking last year and punter **Todd Sauerbrun** rebounded from a disastrous rookie debut but still led the NFC in touchbacks.

The Bears surrendered a No. 1 pick to Seattle for quarterback Rick Mirer (below, at left), who will compete with Erik Kramer (right).



CHICAGO BEARS

Dave Wannstedt, Head Coach

Matt Cavanaugh, Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks; Bob Slowik, Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers; Tony Wise, Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Line; Clarence Brooks, Defensive Line; Willie Peete, Running Backs; Ivan Fears, Wide Receivers; Ted Plumb, Tight Ends; Carlos Mainord, Defensive Backs; Greg Schiano, Nickel; Keith Armstrong, Special Teams; Eric Studesville, Research/Quality Control

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
10	Butterfield, Mark	QB	6-4	215	7/14/73	1 Stanford
12	Kramer, Erik	QB	6-1	200	11/6/64	10 North Carolina State
3	Mirer, Rick	QB	6-2	214	03/19/70	4 Notre Dame
18	Stenstrom, Steve	QB	6-1	202	12/23/71	2 Stanford

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
63	Burger, Todd	G	6-3	303	3/20/70	3 Penn State
72	Clark, Jon	T	6-6	345	4/11/73	1 Temple
64	Heck, Andy	T	6-6	298	1/1/67	8 Notre Dame
79	Parrish, James	T	6-6	310	05/19/68	4 Temple
75	Perry, Todd	G	6-5	312	11/28/70	4 Kentucky
65	Pilgrim, Evan	G	6-4	304	8/14/72	2 Brigham Young
69	Polk, Octus	G	6-3	345	9/17/71	2 Stephen F. Austin
58	Villarrial, Chris	C	6-4	305	6/9/73	1 Indiana (PA)
71	Williams, James	T	6-7	340	3/29/68	6 Cheyenne State

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
38	Faulkerson, Mike	RB	6-1	245	9/9/70	2 North Carolina
44	Hicks, Michael	RB	6-1	241	2/1/73	1 South Carolina State
31	Salaam, Rashaan	RB	6-1	224	10/8/74	2 Colorado

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
82	Bowens, Fabien	WR	5-11	186	2/29/72	2 Western Illinois
84	Cash, Kerry	TE	6-4	245	8/7/69	6 Texas
86	Coleman, Mill	WR	5-9	176	06/19/72	2 Michigan State
80	Conway, Curtis	WR	6-1	194	3/13/71	4 Southern California
81	Engram, Bobby	WR	5-9	192	1/7/73	1 Penn State
88	Jackson, Jack	WR	5-8	174	11/11/72	2 Florida
85	Jennings, Keith	TE	6-4	275	05/19/66	8 Clemson
87	Neely, Bobby	TE	6-3	255	3/22/74	1 Virginia
88	Proehl, Ricky	WR	6-1	190	3/7/68	7 Wake Forest
15	Riley, Phillip	WR	5-11	189	9/24/72	1 Florida State
89	Wetnight, Ryan	TE	6-2	235	11/5/70	4 Stanford

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
91	Davis, Robert	DT	6-2	270	12/10/68	1 Shippensburg
93	Grasmanis, Paul	DT	6-2	298	8/2/74	1 Notre Dame
73	Keyes, Marcus	DT	6-3	303	10/20/73	1 North Alabama
68	Reeves, Carl	DE	6-4	265	12/17/71	2 North Carolina State
98	Simpson, Carl	DT	6-2	292	4/18/70	4 Ohio State
90	Spellman, Alonzo	DE	6-4	292	9/27/71	5 Ohio State
94	Thierry, John	DE	6-4	265	9/4/71	3 Alcorn State
97	Zorich, Chris	DT	6-1	282	3/13/69	6 Notre Dame

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
35	Burton, James	CB	5-9	184	4/21/71	3 Fresno State
20	Carrier, Mark	S	6-1	192	4/28/68	7 Southern California
23	Carter, Marty	S	6-1	212	12/17/69	6 Middle Tennessee State
25	Carter, Tom	CB	6-1	186	9/5/72	4 Notre Dame
46	Forbes, Marlon	S	6-1	205	12/25/71	1 Penn State
27	Harris, Walt	CB	5-11	194	8/10/74	1 Mississippi State
33	Hughes, Tyrone	CB	5-9	175	1/14/70	4 Nebraska
32	Joseph, Dwayne	CB	5-9	186	6/2/72	2 Syracuse
26	Mangum, John	S	5-10	190	3/16/67	7 Alabama
36	Marshall, Anthony	S	6-1	212	9/16/70	3 Louisiana State
25	Martin, Chris	CB	5-9	181	9/1/74	1 Northwestern
24	Miniefield, Kevin	CB	5-9	182	3/2/70	4 Arizona State

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
52	Cox, Bryan	LB	6-4	250	2/17/68	6 Western Illinois
57	Harris, Sean	LB	6-3	245	2/25/72	2 Arizona
95	Howard, Dana	LB	6-1	238	2/25/72	2 Illinois
53	Lowery, Michael	LB	6-1	224	2/14/74	1 Mississippi
92	Minter, Barry	LB	6-2	242	1/28/70	4 Tulsa
53	Peterson, Tony	LB	6-1	223	1/23/72	3 Notre Dame

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
1	Jaeger, Jeff	K	5-11	195	11/26/64	10 Washington
16	Sauerbrun, Todd	P	5-10	209	1/20/71	2 West Virginia

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
54	Briggs, Greg*	LB	6-3	212	10/1/68	2	Texas Southern
59	Cain, Joe*	LB	6-1	242	6/11/65	8	Oregon Tech
30	Carter, Tony	FB	5-11	236	8/23/72	3	Minnesota
99	Flanigan, Jim	DT	6-2	286	8/27/71	3	Notre Dame
67	Fontenot, Jerry*	C	6-3	300	11/21/66	8	Texas A&M
29	Harris, Raymont	RB	6-0	225	12/23/70	3	Ohio State
9	Matthews, Shane*	QB	6-3	196	6/1/70	3	Florida
55	Smith, Vinson*	LB	6-2	248	7/3/65	9	East Carolina
76	Spears, Marcus*	T	6-4	305	9/28/71	3	NW Louisiana State

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
2	38	John Allred	TE	6-4	246	Southern California
3	69	Bob Sapp	G	6-4	303	Washington
4	105	Darnell Autry	RB	5-10	210	Northwestern
4	108	Marcus Robinson	WR	6-3	215	Southern California
5	141	Van Hiles	DB	5-11	188	Kentucky
6	196	Shawn Swayda	DE	6-4	275	Arizona State
6	200	Richard Hogans	LB	6-2	249	Memphis
6	201	Ricky Parker	DB	6-0	196	San Diego State
7	210	Mike Miano	DT	6-3	303	Southwest Missouri State
7	233	Marvin Thomas	DE	6-4	265	Memphis

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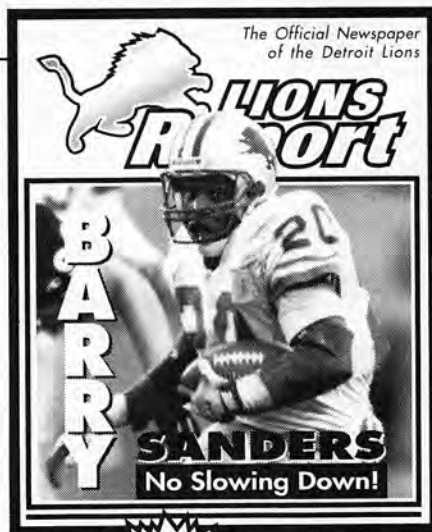
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DETROIT LIONS



No running back strikes more fear in the heart of a defense than the Lions' Barry Sanders.

The Lions won the NFC Central Division title in 1991, finished last in '92, first in '93, third in '94, second in '95, and last in '96. That means they are headed for first again, thanks in part to an easier schedule. That schedule is about the only thing under new coach **Bobby Ross** that will be easier. The Lions had their problems under Wayne Fontes, but overwork wasn't one of them.

Ross is putting his organization and discipline in his new team much the way he did in five years with the Chargers. There, he took over a club that was last in the AFC West and finished first in 1992, fourth in '93, first and a Super Bowl trip in '94, second in '95, and third in '96.

A Running Start

Always more comfortable with a running game, whether led by Marion Butts or Natrone Means, Ross watched his Chargers plummet to 29th in the league in rushing after Means left. So of all the jobs available, Ross chose the team that had **Barry Sanders**. Running will be the least of his problems.

The Lions dropped from first in the league in offense in 1995 to 20th last year, an astonishing free-fall for a team employing essentially the same personnel. Injuries hit the Lions harder than most teams, especially on defense, which contributed to their failure on offense. But through the ups and downs, Sanders has remained as steady a player as the NFL can boast.

Few runners get hit as much in the backfield or get thrown for as many losses as Sanders, but no other back strikes more fear in the heart of a defense. Ross is trying to make Sanders a more consistent threat by using more blockers in a conventional offense. If it works, Sanders could be ruled an unfair advantage.

Stability on Offense

With Fontes, the Lions changed offensive philosophies as often as Sanders needed to change shoes. The run-

and-shoot was followed by a three wide-receiver set. In general, Sanders was allowed to freelance through a spread field. Sanders may suffer under the confines of a tighter formation and more conventional plays. There is a chance that his style will be cramped, that he will run into blockers rather than stay behind them. Ross is willing to find out.

Quarterback **Scott Mitchell** stands to benefit most from stability on offense. He never seemed comfortable with Fontes or with the offense of the day, but the Lions re-signed him to a \$22 million deal. That's a lot of money just to hand off to Sanders, so there is obviously more up offensive coordinator Sylvester Croom's sleeve.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	313.3	20
Passing	200.2	18
Rushing	113.1	12
Scoring	18.8	21
Punting	42.9	T15
Punt Returns	8.4	25
Kick Returns	24.3	T3
Total Defense	334.4	20
Against Pass	209.0	18
Against Run	125.4	25
Points Allowed	23.0	22
Interceptions	11	T27
Sacks	32	T21

Catching On

Glyn Milburn is one more weapon for Mitchell's huddle. While **Herman Moore** and **Johnnie Morton** are the starting receivers, Ross liked Milburn when he played in Denver and feels the Lions underutilized him after they got him last season. As a third receiver and a change-of-pace third-down back, Milburn has the quickness to take the pressure off Sanders and complement him as an all-the-way threat.

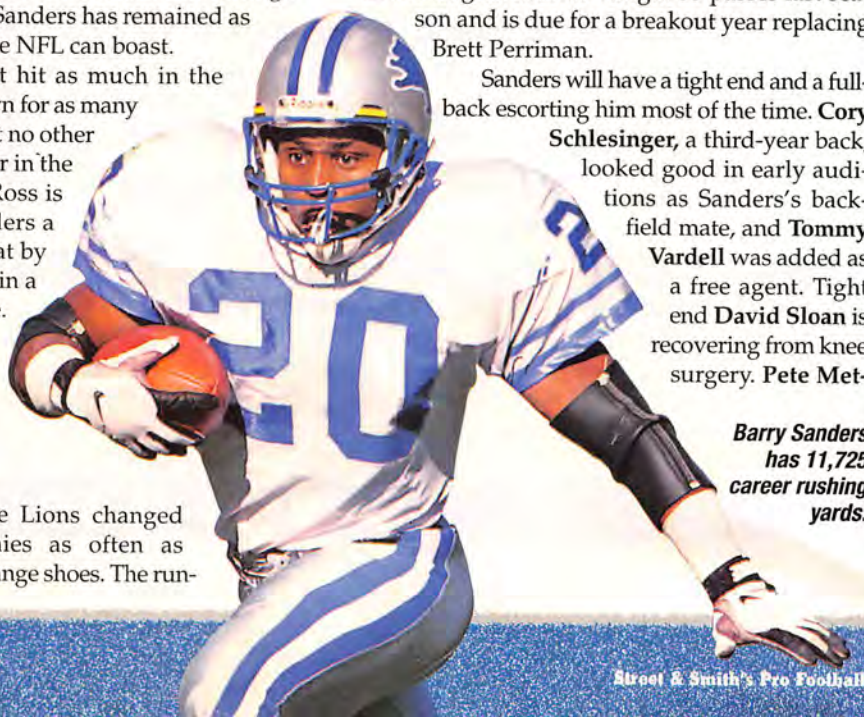
Moore has 229 catches in the last two years, yet he rightfully finds it difficult to explain how he performed for the 20th-best offense in the league. Morton caught 55 passes last season and is due for a breakout year replacing Brett Perriman.

Sanders will have a tight end and a full-back escorting him most of the time. **Cory Schlesinger**, a third-year back, looked good in early auditions as Sanders's backfield mate, and **Tommy Vardell** was added as a free agent. Tight end **David Sloan** is recovering from knee surgery. **Pete Met-**

Barry Sanders
has 11,725
career rushing
yards.



Quarterback **Scott Mitchell** (at top) will be looking for Lions receiver **Herman Moore** (at bottom).



the key stats

The Lions had the best offense and the worst defense in the NFC inside the red zone. **Scott Mitchell** passed for 2,917 yards but had as many touchdowns as interceptions (17). **Barry Sanders** led the NFL in rushing (1,553 yards) and **Herman Moore** was No. 2 in receptions (106). **Robert Porcher** led the club in sacks (10).



Lions center Kevin Glover (at right, above) is an all-pro player, an honor that could befall right guard Jeff Hartings (at left, above).

zelaars is an excellent blocker, and Notre Dame's Pete Chryplewicz is a fifth-rounder who could push for playing time.

Block and Tackle

Rookie Juan Roque, newcomer Larry Tharp, and second-year man Chris Harrison are the early favorites to replace Zefross Moss at right tackle. Right guard Jeff Hartings, who held out for much of his rookie season, looks like a future all-pro. Kevin Glover is a Pro Bowl center. The left side features guard Mike Compton and tackle Ray Roberts.

The defense is a bigger challenge than the offense, even though both finished 20th. Replacing tackle Henry Thomas in a new system is the Lions' first problem. Ends Robert Porcher and Tracy Scroggins will get help from second-year pass rusher Kerwin Waldroup. Tackle Luther Elliss is solid. Mike Wells and Shane Dronett are untested at Thomas's spot.

At linebacker, the Lions never replaced Chris Spielman. Drafting Colorado's Butkus Award winner, Matt Russell, is a step in that direction. George Jamison will push Antonio London at one outside spot. Reggie Brown is the other starter.

Turning the Corner

The Lions were in such need of help at cornerback that they drafted Texas's Bryant Westbrook with their first pick and moved up in the second round after landing Roque to get Syracuse's Kevin Abrams. Unless Corey Raymond keeps his job, the Lions will start two rookie corners. Bennie Blades is gone, so Van Malone and Ryan Stewart will compete for strong safety, and Ron Rice and Harry Colon for free safety.

John Jett is the new punter. Jason Hansen remains the placekicker. Milburn and rookie Terry Battle handle returns.

DETROIT LIONS

Bobby Ross, Head Coach

Sylvester Croom, Offensive Coordinator; Larry Peccatiello, Defensive Coordinator; Brian Baker, Defensive Line; Don Clemons, Defensive Assistant/Assistant Strength and Conditioning; Frank Finks, Running Backs; Jack Henry, Offensive Line; Bert Hill, Strength and Conditioning; Stan Kwan, Coaching Assistant; John Misciagna, Quality Control/Offense; Gary Moeller, Linebackers; Dennis Murphy, Quality Control - Defense; Bob Palcio, Tight Ends; Chuck Priefer, Special Teams; Richard Selcer, Secondary; Jerry Sullivan, Receivers; Marc Trestman, Quarterbacks

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
10	Blundin, Matt	QB	6-6	233	3/7/69	4 Virginia
13	Johnson, Johnny	QB	6-1	202	1/21/73	1 Illinois
19	Mitchell, Scott	QB	6-6	230	1/2/68	6 Utah
7	Reich, Frank	QB	6-4	210	12/4/61	12 Maryland
12	Strom, Rick	QB	6-2	200	3/11/65	8 Georgia Tech

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
77	Compton, Mike	C	6-6	297	9/18/70	4 West Virginia
76	Conover, Scott	T	6-4	276	9/27/68	6 Purdue
53	Glover, Kevin	C	6-2	282	6/17/63	12 Maryland
74	Harrison, Chris	G	6-3	290	2/25/72	1 Virginia
64	Hartings, Jeff	G	6-3	283	9/7/72	1 Penn State
66	Hempstead, Hessley	G	6-1	295	1/29/72	2 Kansas
70	Jones, Jeff	T	6-6	310	5/30/72	2 Texas A&M
72	Roberts, Ray	T	6-6	308	6/3/69	5 Virginia
69	Solomon, Ariel	C	6-5	290	7/16/68	6 Colorado

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
30	Baxter, Brad	RB	6-1	235	5/5/67	8 Alabama State
43	Johnson, Tracy	RB	6-1	248	11/29/66	8 Clemson
26	Lynch, Eric	RB	5-10	224	5/16/70	5 Grand Valley State
33	Milburn, Glyn	RB	5-8	177	02/19/71	4 Stanford
34	Rivers, Ron	RB	5-8	205	11/13/71	2 Fresno State
20	Sanders, Barry	RB	5-8	203	7/16/68	8 Oklahoma State
30	Schlesinger, Cory	RB	6-1	230	6/23/72	2 Nebraska
21	Williams, Allen	RB	5-10	205	9/17/72	2 Maryland

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
81	Hickman, Kevin	TE	6-4	258	8/20/71	2 Navy
17	Macik, Miles	WR	6-4	210	9/15/73	1 Pennsylvania
10	McCorvey, Kez	WR	6-1	180	1/23/72	2 Florida State
89	Metzelaars, Pete	TE	6-7	254	5/24/60	15 Wabash
84	Moore, Herman	WR	6-3	210	10/20/69	6 Virginia
87	Morton, Johnnie	WR	5-11	190	10/7/71	3 Southern California
82	Price, Derek	TE	6-3	240	8/12/72	1 Iowa
86	Sloan, David	TE	6-6	254	6/8/72	2 New Mexico
49	Stocz, Eric	TE	6-3	278	5/25/74	1 Westminster

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
94	Elliss, Luther	DT	6-5	291	3/22/73	2 Utah
91	Porcher, Robert	DT	6-3	283	7/30/69	5 South Carolina State
97	Scroggins, Tracy	DE	6-2	255	9/11/69	5 Tulsa
98	Thomas, Henry	DT	6-2	277	1/12/65	10 Louisiana State
93	Waldroup, Kerwin	DT	6-3	260	8/1/74	1 Central State
90	Washington, Keith	DE	6-4	270	12/18/73	2 UNLV

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
24	Colon, Harry	S	6-1	203	2/14/69	6 Missouri
44	Ford, Brad	CB	5-10	170	1/11/74	1 Alabama
25	Jeffries, Greg	CB	5-9	184	10/16/71	4 Virginia
31	Raymond, Corey	CB	5-11	185	7/28/69	5 Louisiana State
28	Rice, Ron	S	6-1	206	11/9/72	2 Eastern Michigan
38	Stewart, Ryan	S	6-1	207	9/30/73	1 Georgia Tech

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
51	Beer, Tom	LB	6-1	221	3/27/69	3 Wayne State
57	Boyd, Stephen	LB	6-1	247	8/22/72	2 Boston College
59	Brown, Reggie	LB	6-2	241	9/28/74	1 Texas A&M
56	Hamilton, Rick	LB	6-2	241	04/19/70	4 Central Florida
52	Kowalkowski, Scott	LB	6-2	228	8/23/68	6 Notre Dame
55	London, Antonio	LB	6-2	234	4/14/71	4 Alabama

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
4	Hanson, Jason	K	5-11	183	6/17/70	5 Washington State
19	Jett, John	P	6-1	199	11/11/68	4 East Carolina

NO.	NAME	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE
96	Bonham, Shane	DL	6-2	275	10/18/70	3 Tennessee
1	Majkowski, Don*	QB	6-3	208	2/25/64	10 Virginia
39	Malone, Van	S	5-11	195	7/1/70	3 Texas
83	Matthews, Aubrey*	WR	5-7	165	9/15/62	11 Delta State
47	McNeil, Ryan*	CB	6-2	192	10/4/70	4 Miami
80	Perriman, Brett	WR	5-9	180	10/10/65	9 Miami
62	Semple, Tony	G	6-4	286	12/20/70	3 Memphis State
95	Wells, Mike	DT	6-3	287	1/6/71	3 Iowa

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	5	Bryant Westbrook	DB	6-2	199	Texas
2	35	Juan Roque	T	6-8	333	Arizona State
2	54	Kevin Abrams	DB	5-8	175	Syracuse
4	130	Matt Russell	LB	6-2	245	Colorado
5	135	Pete Chryplewicz	TE	6-5	253	Notre Dame
5	161	Duane Ashman	DE	6-4	274	Virginia
6	168	Tony Ramirez	T	6-6	296	Northern Colorado
7	206	Terry Battle	RB	5-11	197	Arizona State
7	232	Marcus Harris	WR	6-2	213	Wyoming
7	239	Richard Jordan	LB	6-1	265	Missouri Southern

The Panthers are on their way toward their goal of home-field advantage in the playoffs.

by Don Pierson *Chicago Tribune*

Predicted order of finish



* wild card

The story of the league last season was the upstart Carolina Panthers, who unseated the perennial division champion San Francisco 49ers, and their coach, Dom Capers, who ran every division rival coach out of a job.

The Panthers didn't exactly sneak into the throne room. They have clobbered the 49ers three of the four times they have played now, putting huge pressure on new 49er coach Steve Mariucci to accomplish what George Seifert could not. Seifert, you recall, was the coach who got to 100 victories faster than anyone in NFL history.

Carolina Panthers

Most remarkable about the Panthers' ascendency was that they did it without help from their injured top draft choices from last year: Tshimanga Biakabutuka and Muhsin Muhammad. With those two healthy, plus free agents Micheal Barrow, Ernie Mills, and Ray Seals, and rookie speed receiver Rae Carruth, the Panthers are on their way toward their goal of home-field advantage.

Mark December 14 on the calendar. The Green Bay Packers visit Ericsson Stadium, where the Panthers have yet to lose.

San Francisco 49ers*

When the 49ers are kicking out coaches and drafting quarterbacks, you know there is an interruption in eras. Steve Mariucci arrives with a reputation for developing quarterbacks, and Jim Druckenmiller, the club's top draft pick, is now Steve Young's heir apparent.

Even if wide receiver Jerry Rice stays in his prime for 10 more years, the defense remains the key to San Francisco's chances. It was excellent last year, yet the 49ers were 0-5 in games against Green Bay, Carolina, and Dallas.

St. Louis Rams

If enthusiasm is all the Rams lacked, Dick Vermeil will be in the Super Bowl soon. Rejuvenated after 14 years out of the NFL, Vermeil returns with passion, with plenty of young talent, including the No. 1 pick in the draft in Orlando Pace, and, alas, with the worst combination of offensive and defensive output in the league.

The development of second-year quarterback Tony Banks is more crucial than the deportment of second-year running back Lawrence Phillips. With Pace on the line and newcomer Craig Heyward in the backfield, Vermeil will run.



Nothing could be finer: Carolina linebacker Sam Mills.

New Orleans Saints

Mike Ditka will do this his way. While others snickered, Ditka reached for draft choices ahead of their conventional time. When a team is as forlorn as the Saints, how can anybody argue with him?

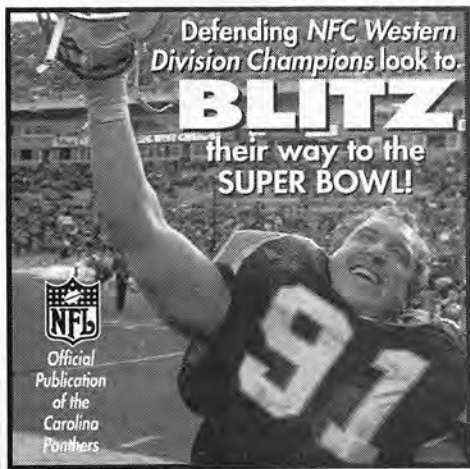
The worst running team in the league, the Saints will run if Ditka has to strap on the equipment himself. The defense isn't half bad, but it must stop the run. Heath Shuler figures to replace Jim Everett at quarterback, but don't count out Heisman Trophy winner Danny Wuerffel, who nobody but Ditka thought was worth drafting.

Atlanta Falcons

Ditka's buddy, Dan Reeves, took over the worst defense in the conference. Nobody in the league gave up more points than the Falcons. To stem the tide, they had to settle for drafting the fourth cornerback, Michael Booker, with the 11th pick. Signing free-agent cornerback Ray Buchanan will help, but new quarterback Chris Chandler is going to have to outscore a lot of teams for the Falcons to make a move up in the division.

Reeves is the winningest active coach in the league, but this is the first time he will not be coaching in front of a full stadium. His work is cut out for him.

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The Carolina Panthers were one game away from the Super Bowl last year.

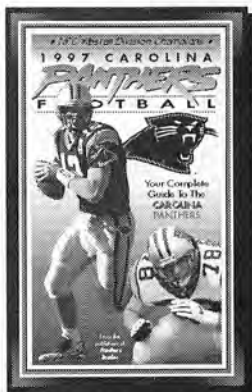
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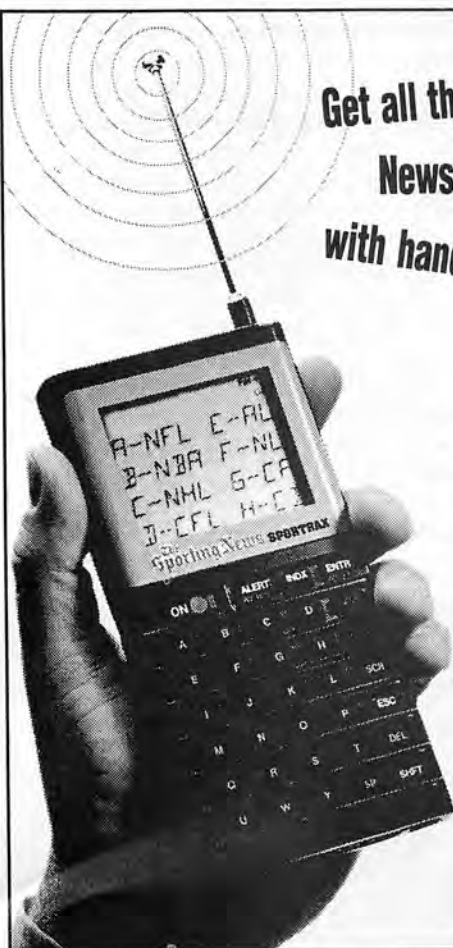
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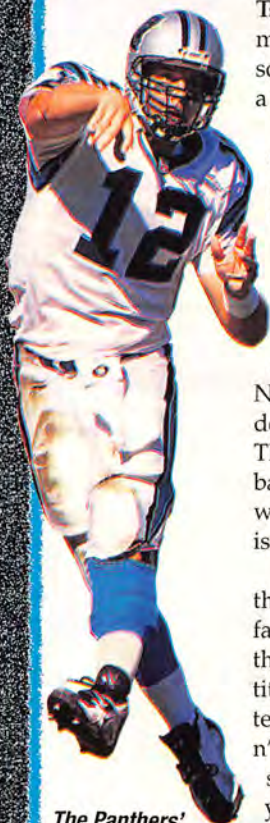
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CAROLINA PANTHERS



The Panthers are providing new meaning to the descriptions fast and spectacular.

Kerry Collins (below) has deep threats in Carolina.



The Panthers' defensive backfield (below, left to right): Tyrone Poole, Eric Davis, and Pat Terrell.

The fast and spectacular rise of the Panthers from expansion team to NFC title contender was helped in part by a double dose of draft picks in their first two years, an advantage some rivals felt was unfair in an era of free agency.

Guess what? The Panthers enter year three of their existence with, in effect, another double draft. Tshimanga Biakabutuka and Muhsin Muhammad missed most of their rookie years due to injuries, so the Panthers figure they are luxury additions to a team that performed quite well without them.

Add surprise No. 1 draft pick **Rae Carruth** to a suddenly burgeoning collection of speed receivers, and the Panthers are providing new meaning to the descriptions fast and spectacular.

Fast Forward

Though there was nothing slow about their development as NFC forces, the Panthers succeeded despite a lack of overall team speed. That is no longer the case. Quarterback **Kerry Collins** has deep threats wherever he looks, and the defense is faster, too.

At the risk of fast-forwarding their season too far ahead, Panther fans can look to December 14, when the Packers come to town for a rematch of the NFC title game. Coach **Dom Capers** has convinced his team never to look beyond Sunday, but that doesn't mean the fans can't. It was Collins who first suggested that the Panthers will be playing this year for home-field advantage in the playoffs.

Back in Business

Biakabutuka, last year's No. 1 draft choice, is expected to be fully recovered from a knee injury suffered in Week 4. **Anthony Johnson's** sensational season as the fill-in at tailback gives the Panthers

security at the position, but a healthy Biakabutuka will be one of the fastest backs in football, giving the offense an outside threat that Johnson doesn't provide. After losing fullbacks Howard Griffith and Bobby Christian in free agency, that position is left to **Scott Greene** unless Johnson can play in the same backfield with Biakabutuka.

Muhammad showed such promise as a big, fast, tough receiver that the Panthers weren't worried when Willie Green signed with Denver. The Panthers added ex-Steeler **Ernie Mills**, who is coming off a knee injury, as protection in case leading receiver **Mark Carrier** isn't re-signed. They also re-

signed **Raghib Ismail** in hopes that the Rocket would benefit from a full training camp in the system. He caught only 12 passes after arriving from Oakland in late August. When Carruth, the fastest receiver in the draft, fell to the 27th spot, the Panthers couldn't pass him up.

Great Expectations

The Panthers opened up their offense last year with the arrival of tight end **Wesley Walls**, who led the club with 61 catches and 10 touchdowns. Collins is likely to be turned loose more often by coordinator Joe

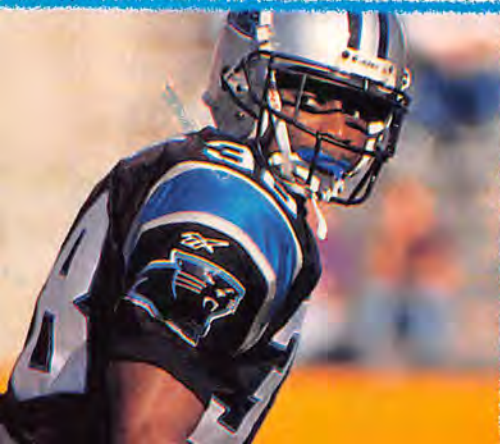
Pendry, sometimes criticized as too conservative. It's a bad rap, considering the games the Panthers have won. Collins needs to be careful and allow the defense to work, but when the Panthers opened up against the 49ers last season, Collins came through with a brilliant performance. The Panthers expect bigger things in Collins's third season.

Injuries in the offensive line forced some juggling but allowed the Panthers to develop depth. **Mathew Campbell** moved in at left tackle for **Blake Brockermeyer**, and rookie **Norberto Garri-**do started at right tackle. **Frank Garcia** will try to

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	300.8	23
Passing	192.7	22
Rushing	108.1	15
Scoring	22.9	7
Punting	40.5	28
Punt Returns	11.3	T7
Kick Returns	26.2	1
Total Defense	298.5	10
Against Pass	200.9	12
Against Run	97.6	8
Points Allowed	13.6	2
Interceptions	22	T7
Sacks	60	1



the key stats

Kevin Greene led the NFL with 14.5 sacks, and **Lamar Lathon** had 13.5 of Carolina's league-high 60. **John Kasay** was first in the NFL in scoring (145 points) and field goals (37). **Michael Bates** averaged 30.2 yards per kickoff return, tops in the league. **Kerry Collins** threw just one interception in the fourth quarter last season.



Kicker John Kasay (at left) gives the Carolina offense a leg up.

hold off the comeback by center Curtis Whitley. Versatile Matt Elliott ended up at left guard, and Greg Skrepenak at right guard was the only lineman to stay at one spot in '96.

Free-Agent Bonanza

With the age of his defense a concern to everybody but Capers, the Panthers made the re-signing of 37-year-old linebacker **Sam Mills** a priority. Mills remains the heart of a unit that allowed only 218 points, including a league-low 56 over the second half last season. Mills, Walls, linebackers **Lamar Lathon** and **Kevin Greene**, cornerback **Eric Davis**, kicker **John Kasay**, and kick returner **Michael Bates** made the Pro Bowl and all were signed as free agents by GM Bill Polian.

This year, the Panthers landed linebacker **Micheal Barrow** from the Oilers to take over the inside spot manned last year by **Carlton Bailey**. They added defensive end **Ray Seals** from the Steelers to take over for **Gerald Williams**. Seals will play with end **Mike Fox** and nose tackle **Greg Kragen**, with Williams as a backup.

Greene and Lathon, 1-2 in the NFL in sacks, return for another season they hope turns out as well. Greene trails Lawrence Taylor by 10 sacks as the all-time leader among linebackers. Drafting active rookies **Kinnon Tatum**, **Tarek Saleh**, and **Matt Finkes** adds more speed and depth.

On the Fast Track

Davis and **Tyrone Poole** are solid corners. Second-round draftee **Mike Minter** has the speed to provide depth in a thin area. After his five interceptions while playing part-time, strong safety **Chad Cota** should move into the spot vacated by Brett Maxie. **Pat Terrell** is the free safety.

CAROLINA PANTHERS

Dom Capers, Head Coach

Vic Fangio, Defensive Coordinator; Joe Pendry, Offensive Coordinator; Don Breau, Tight Ends; Blair Bush, Assistant Offensive Line; George Catavolos, Defensive Backs; Billy Davis, Outside Linebackers; Ted Gill, Defensive Line; Chick Harris, Running Backs; Jim McNally, Offensive Line; Chip Morton, Strength and Conditioning; Greg Roman, Assistant Strength and Conditioning; Brad Seely, Special Teams; John Shoop, Quarterbacks; Kevin Steele, Linebackers; Richard Williamson, Wide Receivers

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Barker, Jay	QB	6-3	220	7/20/72	2 Alabama
7	Beuerlein, Steve	QB	6-3	220	3/7/65	9 Notre Dame
12	Collins, Kerry	QB	6-5	240	12/30/72	2 Penn State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
78	Brockermeyer, Blake	T	6-4	305	4/11/73	2 Texas
66	Campbell, Matthew	T	6-4	290	7/14/72	2 South Carolina
52	Elliott, Matt	G	6-3	295	10/1/68	5 Michigan
65	Garcia, Frank	G	6-2	302	1/28/72	2 Washington
76	Garrido, Norberto	T	6-5	308	10/4/72	1 Southern California
67	Hayes, Brandon	G	6-4	308	3/11/73	2 Central State
63	Rodenhauser, Mark	C	6-5	280	6/1/61	10 Illinois State
75	Skrepenak, Greg	G	6-7	330	1/31/70	5 Michigan
64	Whitley, Curtis	C	6-1	295	5/10/69	5 Clemson

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Biakabutuka, Tim	RB	6-1	215	1/24/74	1 Michigan
43	Greene, Scott	RB	5-10	225	6/1/72	1 Michigan State
23	Johnson, Anthony	RB	6-1	225	10/25/67	7 Notre Dame
26	O'Neal, Brian	RB	6-1	233	2/25/70	3 Penn State
20	Oliver, Winslow	RB	5-7	180	3/3/73	1 New Mexico
22	Smith, Marquette	RB	5-7	190	7/14/72	1 Central Florida
28	Smith, Tony	RB	6-1	215	6/29/70	5 Southern Mississippi

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
82	Bates, Michael	WR	5-10	189	12/19/69	4 Arizona
81	Ismail, Raghib	WR	5-11	180	11/18/69	4 Notre Dame
89	Mills, Ernie	WR	5-11	192	10/28/68	6 Florida
87	Muhammad, Muhsin	WR	6-2	220	5/5/73	1 Michigan State
89	Tucker, Syll	TE	6-4	236	7/31/73	1 Miami (FL)
85	Walls, Wesley	TE	6-5	250	2/26/66	8 Mississippi

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
92	Colston, Tim	DE	6-1	275	12/18/73	1 Kansas State
93	Fox, Mike	DE	6-8	297	8/5/67	7 West Virginia
96	King, Shawn	DE	6-3	278	6/24/72	2 Northeast Louisiana
71	Kragen, Greg	NT	6-3	272	3/4/62	12 Utah State
97	Seals, Ray	DE	6-3	306	6/17/65	8 NONE
98	Williams, Gerald	DE	6-3	293	9/8/63	11 Auburn

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
48	Abraham, Clifton	CB	5-9	184	12/9/71	2 Florida State
37	Cota, Chad	S	6-1	198	8/13/71	2 Oregon
25	Davis, Eric	CB	5-11	185	1/26/68	7 Jacksonville State
26	McDaniel, Emmanuel	CB	5-9	182	7/27/72	1 East Carolina
27	Pieri, Damon	S	6-1	190	9/25/70	4 San Diego State
38	Poole, Tyrone	CB	5-9	185	2/3/72	2 Fort Valley State
31	Reed, Michael	CB	5-9	182	8/16/72	2 Boston College
31	Smith, Rod	CB	5-11	187	3/12/70	5 Notre Dame
40	Terrell, Pat	S	6-2	218	3/18/68	7 Notre Dame

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
56	Barrow, Micheal	LB	6-2	236	04/19/70	4 Miami (FL)
91	Greene, Kevin	LB	6-3	247	7/31/62	12 Auburn
50	Jacobs, Ray	LB	6-2	244	8/18/72	3 North Carolina
57	Lathon, Lamar	LB	6-3	260	12/23/67	7 Houston
51	Mills, Sam	LB	5-9	232	6/3/59	11 Montclair State
58	Royal, Andre	LB	6-2	240	12/1/72	2 Alabama

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Gragert, Brian	P	6-1	228	8/14/72	1 Wyoming
4	Kasay, John	K	5-10	198	10/27/69	6 Georgia

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
54	Bailey, Carlton*	LB	6-3	242	12/15/64	9	North Carolina
56	Baker, Myron*	LB	6-1	234	1/6/71	4	Louisiana Tech
50	Bickett, Duane*	LB	6-5	251	12/1/62	12	Southern California
83	Carrier, Mark*	WR	6-0	186	10/28/65	10	Nicholls State
41	Cook, Toi*	CB	5-11	188	12/3/64	10	Stanford
29	Lofton, Steve*	CB	5-9	177	11/26/68	5	Texas A&M
69	Miller, Les*	DE	6-7	285	3/1/65	9	Fort Hayes State
90	Phillon, Ed	DT	6-2	277	3/27/70	2	Ferris State
32	Philyaw, Dino*	RB	5-10	199	10/30/70	2	Oregon
88	Rasby, Walter	TE	6-3	247	9/7/72	2	Wake Forest
3	Stark, Rohn*	P	6-3	203	5/4/59	15	Florida State
80	Stone, Dwight*	WR	6-0	195	1/28/64	10	Mid. Tennessee State
95	Thomas, Mark*	DE	6-5	275	5/6/69	5	NC State

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	27	Rae Carruth	WR	5-11	194	Colorado
2	56	Mike Minter	S	5-10	188	Nebraska
3	87	Kinnon Tatum	LB	6-0	222	Notre Dame
4	122	Tarek Saleh	LB	6-1	240	Wisconsin
6	189	Matt Finkes	DE	6-3	272	Ohio State
7	228	Kris Mangum	TE	6-4	249	Mississippi

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS



The 49ers do not believe in rebuilding. Any team with Jerry Rice has a chance to win now.

The 49ers saw the handwriting on the wall, and it said zero, as in 0-5 against the Packers, Panthers, and Cowboys last year. The first change they made was to ease coach George Seifert out the door shortly after he got to 100 victories faster than any other coach had ever done.

Now Hear This

By drafting quarterback **Jim Druckenmiller** No. 1, new coach **Steve Mariucci** is looking to the future. But if he ignores the present, he won't be around to reap any benefits from the next generation. The 49ers do not believe in rebuilding. They do not believe **Steve Young** is ready for retirement. After all, they still have **Jerry Rice**, who, at 34, is still in his prime. Any team with Rice has a chance to win now. Any coach of the 49ers is expected to win now.

In switching from Seifert to Mariucci, the 49ers are again placing their emphasis on offense, where they feel the effects of erosion more than they do on defense. After slipping out of the top three in offense for the first time since 1983, the 49ers used all three of their draft choices for offensive players, and made running back **Garrison Hearst** and guard **Kevin Gogan** their first two free-agent signees. If Mariucci is to rekindle an attack that faltered, however slightly, he'll need more weapons.

Run for the Money

Hearst is the key. His signing could tip the balance in the NFC. After agreeing to a modest contract (a \$500,000 cap figure), Hearst wants to prove he is a winner on a winning team. His career has been frustrating after a knee injury in Arizona and a part-time role in Cincinnati.

The 49ers have not been able to replace **Ricky Watters** for two seasons. **Terry Kirby** led the team in rushing (559 yards) last year, but was not as dangerous as Young, who is too beat up to run the way he used

to run. Young missed parts of eight games due to injuries, then had to leave the playoff loss to Green Bay because of sore ribs. It is imperative that Mariucci develop a better running attack.

That's why the 49ers made Notre Dame full-back **Marc Edwards** their No. 2 pick. Although the return of **William Floyd** after a serious knee injury is expected, Floyd is not the kind of lead blocker that a running team needs, especially if Mariucci wants to use more I-formation plays.

Quarterback Class

In Druckenmiller, the 49ers got the top quarterback in his class. His size and skills compare favorably with those of Carolina's **Kerry Collins**, the man the 49ers are chasing in the standings. Young, 36 in October, was sacked 34 times. He won his fifth pass-efficiency title in six years, but this season figures to be his last hurrah. By 1998, Young will be either tutoring Druckenmiller or feeling the same pressure to step aside that sent **Joe Montana** packing.

Adding Gogan to help protect Young is an interesting move, signaling a departure from the preference of line coach **Bobb McKittrick** for smaller, athletic blockers. At 6-6, 330 pounds, Gogan doesn't fit the mold. He

is expected to play right guard, allowing **Chris Dalmann** to slide over to center and replace **Jesse Sapolu**, who underwent surgery to repair a heart valve, which could lead to his retirement. Left guard **Ray Brown** was a big free-agent addition last year. Veteran right tackle **Harris Barton** will be phased out if an adequate replacement can be found. Barton or the bigger **Frank Pollack** may

move to left tackle, where **Steve Wallace** played last season. **Kirk Scrafford** figures to move to the right side to protect Young's back.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	344.1	6
Passing	228.7	7
Rushing	115.4	10
Scoring	24.9	3
Punting	42.9	T15
Punt Returns	9.0	T21
Kick Returns	21.3	21
Total Defense	291.3	7
Against Pass	197.8	11
Against Run	93.6	5
Points Allowed	16.1	T4
Interceptions	20	T12
Sacks	45	5



Young guns: Bryant (top) provides the sack power for the 49ers and Steve (bottom) supplies the firepower.

Jerry Rice (at right) continues to rewrite the record book for receivers.



49ers

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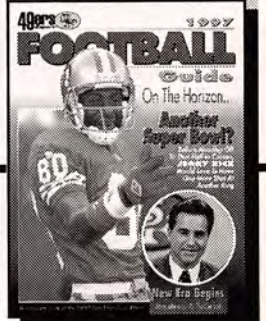
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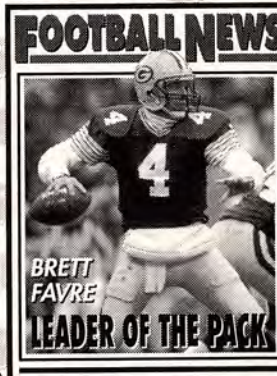
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the key stats

Steve Young had the highest passer rating (97.2), the highest completion percentage (67.7), and the lowest interception percentage (1.9) in the NFL. **Jerry Rice**, who led the league in receptions (108—including 72 for first downs), is tops in NFL history, with 1,050 catches and 165 touchdowns. He needs six points for 1,000.



Dana Stubblefield (above) teams with **Bryant Young** to give San Francisco the finest pair of defensive tackles in the conference.

Jerry Rice Catches On

Rice caught 108 passes, his third straight season over 100. He became the first player to top 1,000 receptions and 16,000 receiving yards. Yet his average of 11.6 yards per catch was the lowest of his career, his longest catch was only 39 yards, and he caught just eight touchdown passes, his lowest total since his rookie season.

Rookie **Terrell Owens** played better than second-year man **J.J. Stokes**, but a healthy Stokes will try to prove he's worthy of his former No. 1 draft position. With the 6-4 Stokes, the 6-2 Owens, and Rice, the 49ers have the NFL's tallest wideouts.

The 49ers ended up with only three draft choices, and the third is Stanford tight end **Greg Clark**, signaling the end is near for **Brent Jones**. Like Young, Jones missed playing time because of an injury (shoulder), but he caught 28 passes over the final six games. Clark is an outstanding blocker.

Fearsome Foursome

Injury hurt the 49ers on defense when tackle **Bryant Young** had to leave the Green Bay playoff game. Nobody is better. With ends **Roy Barker** (12.5 sacks) and **Chris Doleman** (11) playing outside Young (11.5) and **Dana Stubblefield**, no front four is stronger. **Kevin Mitchell** could push **Gary Plummer** for the linebacker job next to **Ken Norton Jr.** and **Lee Woodall**.

Marquez Pope (6 interceptions) and **Tyrone Drakeford** could use help at the corners. **Tim McDonald** and **Merton Hanks** are solid at safety.

Special teams took a beating with the departure of kicker **Jeff Wilkins** to St. Louis and the release of return man **Dexter Carter**. The unsung **Jon Baker** will try to win the kicking job. **Tommy Thompson** is the punter.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Steve Mariucci, Head Coach

John Marshall, Defensive Coordinator; Bill McPherson, Defensive Assistant; Marty Mornhinweg, Offensive Coordinator; Jerry Attaway, Physical Development; Dwaine Board, Defensive Line; Jaime Hill, Defensive Assistant; Larry Kirksey, Wide Receivers; Greg Knapp, Offensive Assistant; Bobb McKittrick, Offensive Line; Patrick Morris, Tight Ends; Jim Mora Jr., Defensive Backs; Tom Rathman, Running Backs; Richard Smith, Linebackers; George Stewart, Special Teams

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
16	Barr, Dave	QB	6-3	205	5/9/72	2	California
11	Brohm, Jeff	QB	6-1	205	4/24/71	3	Louisville
8	Young, Steve	QB	6-2	205	10/11/61	12	Brigham Young
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
79	Barton, Harris	T	6-4	286	4/19/64	10	North Carolina
65	Brown, Ray	G	6-5	315	12/12/62	11	Arkansas State
67	Dalman, Chris	G	6-3	285	3/15/70	4	Stanford
63	Deese, Derrick	G	6-3	275	5/17/70	3	Southern California
66	Gogan, Kevin	G	6-7	325	11/2/64	10	Washington
59	Gordon, Steve	C	6-3	288	4/15/69	5	California
77	Hanshaw, Tim	G	6-5	300	4/27/70	2	Brigham Young
75	Pollack, Frank	T	6-5	285	11/5/67	7	Northern Arizona
64	Rudolph, Joe	G	6-1	285	7/21/72	2	Wisconsin
76	Scraftford, Kirk	T	6-6	275	3/15/67	7	Montana
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
40	Floyd, William	RB	6-1	242	2/17/72	3	Florida State
20	Hearst, Garrison	RB	5-11	215	1/4/71	4	Georgia
41	Kirby, Terry	RB	6-1	218	1/20/70	4	Virginia
32	Levy, Chuck	RB	6-1	197	1/7/72	3	Arizona
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
49	Cooper, Adrian	TE	6-5	255	4/27/68	6	Oklahoma
43	Fann, Chad	TE	6-3	250	6/7/70	4	Florida A&M
84	Jones, Brent	TE	6-4	230	2/12/63	10	Santa Clara
86	Manuel, Sean	TE	6-2	245	12/1/73	1	New Mexico State
81	Owens, Terrell	WR	6-3	213	12/7/73	1	Tennessee-Chattanooga
80	Rice, Jerry	WR	6-2	200	10/13/62	12	Mississippi Valley State
83	Stokes, J.J.	WR	6-4	217	10/6/72	2	UCLA
89	Uwaezuoke, Iheanyi	WR	6-2	195	7/24/73	1	California
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
92	Barker, Roy	DE	6-5	290	2/14/69	5	North Carolina
78	Brandon, Michael	DE	6-4	290	7/30/68	4	Florida
90	Bryant, Junior	DE	6-4	275	1/16/71	2	Notre Dame
56	Doleman, Chris	DE	6-5	275	10/16/61	12	Pittsburgh
59	Ifeanyi, Israel	DE	6-3	246	11/21/70	1	Southern California
91	Price, Daryl	DE	6-3	274	10/23/72	1	Colorado
94	Stubblefield, Dana	DT	6-2	290	11/14/70	4	Kansas
97	Young, Bryant	DT	6-2	280	1/27/72	3	Notre Dame
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Buckley, Curtis	S	6-1	191	9/25/70	4	East Texas State
39	Covington, John	S	6-1	206	4/22/72	3	Notre Dame
36	Dowden, Corey	CB	5-11	190	10/18/68	1	Tulane
22	Drakeford, Tyronne	CB	5-9	185	6/21/71	3	Virginia Tech
36	Hanks, Merton	S	6-2	185	3/12/68	6	Iowa
46	McDonald, Tim	S	6-2	215	1/6/65	10	Southern California
23	Pope, Marquez	S	5-11	193	10/29/70	5	Fresno State
30	Salmon, Mike	S	6-1	207	12/27/70	1	Southern California
27	Smith, Frankie	CB	5-9	182	10/8/68	4	Baylor
45	Walker, Darnell	CB	5-8	168	1/17/70	4	Oklahoma
45	Williams, Michael	CB	5-10	185	5/28/70	2	UCLA
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
57	Kirk, Randy	LB	6-2	231	12/27/64	10	San Diego State
55	Mitchell, Kevin	LB	6-1	250	1/1/71	3	Syracuse
51	Norton, Ken	LB	6-2	241	9/29/66	9	UCLA
50	Plummer, Gary	LB	6-2	247	1/26/60	11	California
62	Sander, Mark	LB	6-2	232	3/21/68	5	Louisville
52	Schwantz, Jim	LB	6-2	240	1/23/70	5	Purdue
54	Woodall, Lee	LB	6-1	220	10/31/69	3	West Chester
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Thompson, Tommy	P	5-10	192	4/27/72	2	Oregon
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Benefield, Dave*	LB	6-4	231	2/16/68	1	Northridge
96	Brown, Dennis	DE	6-4	285	11/6/67	7	Washington
17	Caldwell, Mike*	WR	6-2	200	3/28/71	2	California
53	Peterson, Tony*	LB	6-0	223	1/23/72	3	Notre Dame
85	Popson, Ted*	TE	6-4	250	9/10/66	3	Portland State
74	Wallace, Steve	T	6-5	285	12/27/64	11	Auburn

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	26	Jim Druckenmiller	QB	6-4	230	Virginia Tech
2	55	Marc Edwards	FB	6-0	236	Notre Dame
3	77	Greg Clark	TE	6-4	262	Stanford

SAINT LOUIS RAMS



The shuffling on the line will allow the Rams the time to get the ball to their skill players.

Dick Vermeil is the kind of person who can fire up anyone who listens to him, including himself. When he was named coach of the Rams after 14 years away from the NFL, he spilled out feelings he harbored since leaving the Eagles as a 45-year-old victim of burnout after the 1982 season.

Vermeil thanked new Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie for interviewing him three seasons ago before hiring Ray Rhodes. He said that Lurie helped him see a fire still burning inside to coach. As a broadcaster for ABC college football, Vermeil had remained as close to the game and the play-

ers as any of his counterparts, so the unusually long hiatus from the sideline should have no bearing on his success. Vermeil was habitually over prepared for his telecasts, often studying films so long into the night that he once woke up a coach when he became curious about a particular nuance he had noticed.

Winning Pace

So it was no surprise that Vermeil noticed that **Orlando Pace** was the best player in college football last year. A no-brainer, you say? Anybody could see that? Maybe so, but Vermeil was the only one to make a trade to take the huge offensive tackle in the draft.

Pace is only the second offensive tackle ever selected No. 1, joining Ron Yary of the Vikings in 1968. If it is difficult to see how an offensive tackle can make much of a difference on a 6-10 team, consider this: The Rams had already lined up with a rookie quarterback, a rookie running back, and a rookie wide receiver last year. The result was one of the worst offenses in the league. It cost coach Rich Brooks his job, but the sacrifice puts Vermeil a step ahead.

The Line on the Rams

In his second year, quarterback **Tony Banks** is likely to be more effective if he is standing up. The Rams were sacked a league-high 57 times, so it didn't take much film study for Vermeil to decide he needed blockers. Pace gives him the flexibility to juggle the entire group. Offensive line coach Jim

Hanifan, one of four former NFL head coaches on Vermeil's staff, will have them ready.

With Pace taking over immediately at left tackle, incumbent **Wayne Gandy** can move to the right side. That enables **Zach Weigert** to shift from tackle to right guard, where he will battle **Dwayne White** and **Fred Miller** for the position. The left-guard spot vacated by **Leo Goeas** should go to former Raiders tackle **Gerald Perry**. At center is **Bern Brostek**. Fourth-round center **Ryan Tucker** is recuperating from knee surgery. Ex-Dolphin tackle **Billy Milner** and two second-year prospects, center **Mike Grutadauria** and **Fred Miller**, also figure in the mix.

the numbers

team stats & league rank		
Total Offense	273.3	27
Passing	172.8	28
Rushing	100.4	20
Scoring	18.9	20
Punting	44.8	T5
Punt Returns	12.5	3
Kick Returns	19.9	27
Total Defense	345.6	26
Against Pass	229.7	26
Against Run	115.9	20
Points Allowed	25.6	27
Interceptions	26	T2
Sacks	32	T21

Time for the Offense

All this shuffling up front is designed to benefit Banks most of all, because if he has time to get the ball to the Rams' skill people, watch out! **Isaac Bruce** and second-year receiver **Eddie Kennison** already are stars waiting for proper recognition in an overcrowded league of receiving stars. Banks will have the benefit of working with veteran **Mark Rypien**. **Jamie Martin** might be ready to provide competition.

By picking up free-agent full-back **Craig Heyward** to play H-back in coordinator Jerry Rhome's offense, the Rams added one of the great blockers in the league. Tight end **Ernie Conwell** is a versatile blocker, runner, and receiver. Running back **Lawrence Phillips** spent part of his off-season in jail for violation of proba-

Cornerback Todd Lyght (below) had five interceptions.

Rams quarterback Tony Banks (above) will have more protection from his offensive line this year.



the key stats

The Rams had more giveaways (44) than any other team. **Tony Banks** had a league-high 21 fumbles. He passed for 2,544 yards with as many touchdowns as interceptions (15). **Lawrence Phillips** led the club in rushing (632 yards). **Isaac Bruce** led in receptions (84—for an NFL-high 1,338 yards). **Eddie Kennison** had two punt-return touchdowns.



Wide receivers Isaac Bruce (at left) and Eddie Kennison (above) combined for 138 receptions and 18 touchdowns last season.

tion. The Rams might be better with him, but they have second-year man **Jerald Moore**, free agent **Ron Moore**, and Heyward available, plus any number of potential free agents wanting to line up behind Pace.

Getting Defensive

New defensive coordinator Bud Carson is expected to make a significant contribution to a unit that underachieved during the last two years. The front four is pretty well set and fairly talented, which is more than can be said for a lot of fronts. **Leslie O'Neal**, **Jimmie Jones**, **D'Marco Farr**, and **Kevin Carter** are active and effective players, although there is not a 300-pounder in the bunch. Second-year man **Jon Kirksey** weighs 350. Backup end **James Harris** will push for playing time.

Adding left linebacker **Michael Jones** from the Raiders to start for **Carlos Jenkins** will enable **Roman Phifer** to stay on the right side and exploit his speed, chasing, and coverage abilities. Phifer led the club in tackles. Middle linebacker **Robert Jones** is the run-stuffer. The Rams added a draft choice whom Vermeil calls an excellent tackler, but who is also a player who could run a play-by-play announcer out of business: **Muadianvita Kazadi**.

Safeties First

Second-round cornerback **Dexter McCleon** might start in place of **Anthony Parker** on the right side opposite **Todd Lyght**. No team has a better pair of young safeties than the Ram duo of **Toby Wright** and **Keith Lyle**. Lyle led the league with nine interceptions.

Just as the Eagles lured placekicker **Chris Boniol** from the division rival Cowboys, the Rams signed **Jeff Wilkins** from the 49ers. Wilkins hit 30 of 34 field goals and was the NFC's No. 2 scorer. **J.T. Thomas** was adequate on kickoff returns.

SAINT LOUIS RAMS

Dick Vermeil, Head Coach

Mike White, Assistant Head Coach/Tight Ends; Jerry Rhome, Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks; Bud Carson, Defensive Coordinator; Nick Aliotti, Defensive Assistant; Steve Brown, Defensive assistant; John Bunting, Linebackers; Chris Clausen, Strength and Conditioning; Dick Coury, Wide Receivers; Frank Gansz, Special Teams/Offensive Assistant; Peter Guinta, Defensive Backs; Jim Hanifan, Offensive Line; Carl Hairston, Defensive Line; Wilbert Montgomery, Running Backs; John Ramsdell, Offensive Assistant/Quality Control; George Warhop, Offensive Line

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Banks, Tony	QB	6-4	220	4/5/73	1 Michigan State
17	Furrer, Will	QB	6-3	210	2/5/68	5 Virginia Tech
10	Martin, Jamie	QB	6-2	215	2/8/70	3 Weber State
11	Rypien, Mark	QB	6-4	231	10/2/62	9 Washington State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
61	Brostek, Bern	C	6-3	300	9/11/66	7 Washington
73	Cherry, Ronald	T	6-4	300	4/15/72	2 McNeese State
70	Gandy, Wayne	T	6-4	292	2/10/71	3 Auburn
66	Gerak, John	G	6-3	295	1/6/70	4 Penn State
60	Gruddauria, Mike	C	6-4	290	12/6/72	1 Central Florida
69	James, Jesse	G	6-4	311	9/16/71	2 Mississippi State
73	Miller, Fred	T	6-7	305	2/6/73	1 Baylor
77	Miller, Billy	T	6-5	304	6/21/72	2 Houston
67	White, Dwayne	G	6-2	315	2/10/67	7 Alcorn State
72	Wiegert, Zach	T	6-4	305	8/16/72	2 Nebraska

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
34	Harris, Derrick	RB	6-1	250	9/18/72	1 Miami (FL)
34	Heyward, Craig	RB	5-11	250	9/26/66	9 Pittsburgh
44	Moore, Jerald	RB	5-9	233	11/20/74	1 Oklahoma
33	Moore, Ronald	RB	5-10	225	1/26/70	4 Pittsburg State
21	Phillips, Lawrence	RB	6-1	229	5/12/75	1 Nebraska
32	Philyaw, Dino	RB	5-10	203	10/6/70	2 Oregon

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
83	Baker, Donnell	WR	6-1	180	12/21/73	1 Southern
80	Bruce, Isaac	WR	6-1	185	11/10/72	3 Memphis
81	Clay, Hayward	TE	6-3	256	7/25/73	1 Texas A&M
84	Conwell, Ernie	TE	6-1	253	8/17/72	1 Washington
88	Kennison, Eddie	WR	6-1	191	1/20/73	1 Louisiana State
86	Laing, Aaron	TE	6-3	264	07/19/71	3 New Mexico State
17	Lee, Kevin	WR	6-1	194	1/1/71	2 Alabama
86	Regular, Moses	TE	6-3	255	10/30/71	1 Missouri Valley
82	Ross, Jermaine	WR	6-1	192	4/27/71	3 Purdue
87	Thomas, J.T.	WR	5-10	173	7/11/71	2 Arizona State
19	Williams, Billy	WR	5-11	175	6/7/71	2 Tennessee

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Carter, Kevin	DE	6-5	274	9/21/73	2 Florida
75	Farr, D'Marco	DT	6-1	270	6/9/71	3 Washington
65	Kirksey, Jon	DT	6-4	350	2/21/70	2 Calif. State-Sacramento
91	O'Neal, Leslie	DE	6-4	270	5/7/64	11 Oklahoma State
97	Osborne, Chuck	DT	6-2	281	11/2/73	1 Arizona
93	Parten, Ty	DE	6-4	272	10/13/69	4 Arizona
94	Robinson, Jeff	DE	6-4	265	2/20/70	4 Idaho
96	Williams, Jay	DE	6-3	280	10/13/71	2 Wake Forest
76	Williams, Tyrone	DE	6-4	275	10/22/72	1 Wyoming
95	Wilson, Troy	DE	6-4	250	11/22/70	4 Pittsburg State
74	Zgonina, Jeff	DT	6-1	282	5/24/70	4 Purdue

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
20	Crawford, Keith	CB	6-2	195	11/21/70	4 Howard Payne
29	Davis, Dexter	CB	5-10	184	3/20/70	6 Clemson
39	Lincoln, Jeremy	CB	5-10	182	4/7/69	4 Tennessee
41	Lyght, Todd	CB	6-1	186	2/9/69	6 Notre Dame
35	Lyle, Keith	S	6-2	204	4/17/72	3 Virginia
23	McBurrows, Gerald	S	5-11	201	10/7/73	2 Kansas
27	Parker, Anthony	CB	5-10	181	2/11/66	8 Arizona State
22	Scurlock, Mike	CB	5-10	200	2/26/72	2 Arizona
38	Walker, Marquis	CB	5-10	173	7/6/72	1 Southeast Missouri St.
32	Wright, Toby	S	5-11	208	11/19/70	3 Nebraska

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
53	Dingle, Nate	LB	6-2	242	9/22/72	2 Cincinnati
54	Gaskins, Percell	LB	6-1	225	4/25/72	1 Kansas State
51	Jenkins, Carlos	LB	6-3	217	7/12/68	6 Michigan State
52	Jones, Mike	LB	6-1	230	4/15/69	6 Missouri
55	Jones, Robert	LB	6-3	244	9/27/69	5 East Carolina
58	Phifer, Roman	LB	6-2	230	3/5/68	6 UCLA
58	Spitulski, Bob	LB	6-3	246	9/10/69	5 Central Florida

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
14	Wilkins, Jeff	K	6-2	192	04/19/72	3 Youngstown State

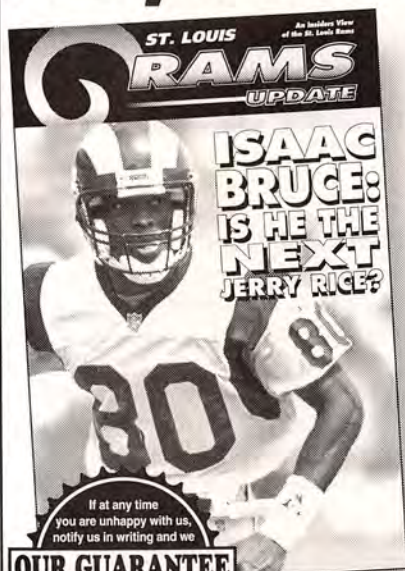
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
20	Crawford, Keith	WR	6-2	185	11/21/70	3	Howard Payne
52	Davis, Paschall*	LB	6-2	225	7/5/69	1	Texas A&I
46	Dorn, Torin*	CB	6-0	200	2/29/68	6	North Carolina
53	Figaro, Cedric*	LB	6-3	242	8/17/66	7	Notre dame
50	Goss, Antonio*	LB	6-4	235	8/11/66	7	North Carolina
30	Green, Harold*	RB	6-2	225	1/29/68	7	South Carolina
8	Lohmiller, Chip*	K	6-3	220	7/16/66	9	Minnesota
24	O'Berry, Herman	CB	5-9	185	7/11/71	1	Oregon
28	Robinson, Greg*	RB	5-10	212	8/8/69	4	NE Louisiana

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	1	Orlando Pace	T	6-7	330	Ohio State
2	40	Dexter McCleon	DB	5-10	198	Clemson
4	112	Ryan Tucker	C	6-5	290	Texas Christian
5	158	Taje Allen	DB	5-10	185	Texas
6	179	Muadianvita Kazadi	LB	6-0	232	Tulsa
7	215	Cedric White	DE	6-2	290	North Carolina A&T

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YEAR / COVER	PRICE	YEAR / COVER	PRICE
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No coach is better equipped than the Saints' Mike Ditka for drawing on emotion.



Jim Everett (above) calls the signals for the Saints.

From their humble beginnings, the Saints have served as a refuge for many NFL retreads, including coaches Tom Fears, Hank Stram, and Bum Phillips. None ever arrived with more bombast and fanfare than Mike Ditka, born to be a Bear but happy to be a Saint. It is the ultimate free-agent move.

"You will not be embarrassed by this team," Ditka promised the faithful who have already started to bring their bags out of their closets to cheer for the "Ain'ts."

Ditka Takes Charge

Ditka was labeled an old-fashioned dinosaur when the Bears disposed of him five seasons ago. It was a label he wore with pride and soon demonstrated why. If Renaldo Turnbull wanted to walk off the field prematurely, as he did with former coach Jim Mora, fine—as long as he just kept walking. If Lorenzo Neal wanted to block for somebody else, that was O.K. He wasn't worth the money anyway. If Jim Everett wants to keep playing quarterback, that's fine, too. But don't expect the job on a silver platter.

If draft experts want to criticize the selection of guard Chris Naeole with the No. 10 pick, two rounds before his time, according to some teams, fine. Let them argue with Naeole. "I'm pretty sure he won't get his feelings hurt if I yell at him," Ditka said of Naeole, who once challenged his Colorado coach, Rick Neuheisel, over a misunderstanding.

With coach Ditka, the Saints will discover that every week will be like week seven of last year, when Mora blew his stack at halftime in a game against the Bears.

Willie Roaf (at left) sets the pace for the New Orleans line.

Playing With Emotion

No coach is better equipped than Ditka for drawing on emotion. Talent is something else, but Ditka is a believer first in effort. His Bears of the 1980s were supremely talented, but they made their mark with how hard they played. Ironically, they fell short because of a lack of talent and depth at quarterback, again a trouble spot for Ditka.

If quarterback were the only shortcoming on this team, fixing it would be a matter of Ditka's will. Bringing in Heath Shuler from the Redskins gives him a young and willing athlete with a reputation for enduring screaming from coaches.

Drafting Florida's Danny Wuerffel gives Ditka a so-called overachiever who somehow failed to impress many scouts even though he won a national championship. They say he pushes the ball instead of passing it. But his college coach, Steve Spurrier, thinks Wuerffel can get to a Super Bowl. So does Ditka, of course.

Run Support

The prettiest passer remains Everett, and Ditka has nothing against good-looking spirals. If the veteran gets enough of them in the right place at the right time, Ditka

will stick with him. Besides, no quarterback is going to thrive in an offense that can't run the ball.

Ditka vowed to run regardless. He then made it tough on himself by letting Neal get away. Without a lead blocker, holdover Mario Bates and third-rounder Troy Davis aren't going to get far in coordinator Danny Abramowicz's offense. Ray Zellers is a former fullback, but look for more change here.

Power Line

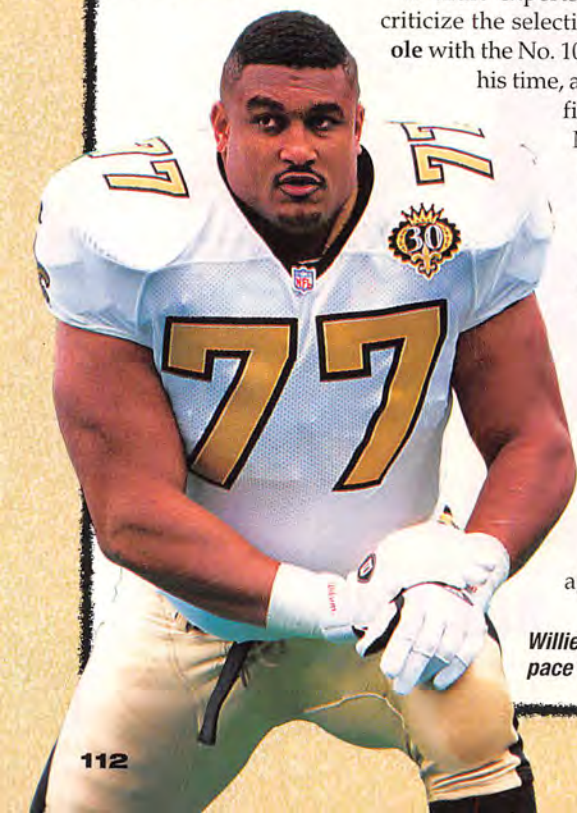
Naeole provides power at right guard, and the Saints are hoping to re-sign free agent Jim Dombrowski to reclaim left guard. Andy McCollum is the center. Clarence Jones is the right tackle and all-star Willie Roaf is so good at left tackle that the Saints had no interest in trying to move up to draft Orlando Pace.

Everett's drop-off in production last year was predictable in the wake of losing tight end Wesley Walls and wide receiver Quinn Early in free agency. Whether the Saints have yet to replace them remains to be seen. Acquiring Oakland's Daryl Hobbs in their trade of first-round picks will add

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	262.9	29
Passing	181.1	25
Rushing	81.8	30
Scoring	14.3	29
Punting	40.8	26
Punt Returns	5.1	29
Kick Returns	24.3	T3
Total Defense	306.9	13
Against Pass	177.1	3
Against Run	129.8	27
Points Allowed	21.2	20
Interceptions	12	T25
Sacks	41	7

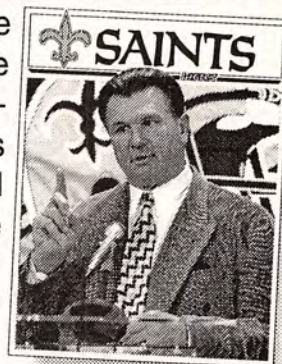


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- 3 How many regular cards are in the Topps 1997 Football Series 1 set?
Hint: See page 19.

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the key stats

The Saints have surrendered the fewest sacks (168) in the NFC in the 1990s. Team leaders: **Mario Bates** (rushing, 584 yards), **Torrance Small** (receptions, 50), **Wayne Martin** (sacks, 11). **Jim Everett** completed 57.5 percent of his passes for 2,797 yards and 12 touchdowns with 16 interceptions. **Daryl Hobbs** had 44 catches for the '96 Raiders.

speed and could push Michael Haynes. Torrance Small was Everett's leading receiver, but he got into the end zone only twice. Fourth-round draft pick **Keith Poole**, another over-achiever, joins the mix after starring as Jake Plummer's favorite target at Arizona State. Tight end **Irv Smith** is a good receiver when healthy, but he will have to be a blocker first in Ditka's offense in order to keep his job. Sixth-round pick **Nicky Savoie** has a chance if he works on his blocking.

Witnesses for the Defense

On defense, Ditka also took a chance, by some accounts, on end **Jared Tomich** in the second round. He is considered a linebacker type because he is undersized, but Ditka likes his motor and figures to start him at end. That would enable **Darren Mickell** to slide to tackle beside all-pro **Wayne Martin**. **Joe Johnson** will stay at the other end. Second-year man **Brady Smith** will challenge for playing time.

Turnbull looks like a full-time linebacker and nickel down rusher. **Winfred Tubbs** will have to turn it up a notch in the middle. **Mark Fields** is still learning the other outside spot.

In the secondary, Ditka drafted another starter in free safety **Rob Kelly**, an accomplished blitzing who figures to contribute faster than last year's No. 1 pick, cornerback **Alex Molden**. **Eric Allen** and **Molden** will start at the corners if **Molden** can keep his job ahead of little but effective **Mark McMillian**. **Anthony Newman** looks like the strong safety.

Punter **Klaus Wilmsmeyer** and kicker **Doug Brien** are in for a surprise if they think Ditka spares his wrath on kickers.

Linebacker Winfred Tubbs (at left, below) led the Saints in tackles; tackle Wayne Martin (at right, below) led the club in sacks.



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Mike Ditka, Head Coach

Rick Venturi, Assistant Head Coach/Linebackers; Danny Abramowicz, Offensive Coordinator; Zaven Yarlarian, Defensive Coordinator; Bobby April, Special Teams; Tom Clemens, Quarterbacks; Walt Corey, Defensive Line; Judd Garrett, Offensive Assistant; Harold Jackson, Wide Receivers; Tom Moore, Running Backs; Dan Neal, Tight Ends/Offensive Assistant; Mike Woicik, Strength and Conditioning; John Pagano, Defensive Assistant; Willie Shaw, Defensive Backs; Dick Stanfel, Offensive Line; Jack Del Rio & Tom Shaw, Assistant Strength and Conditioning

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
17	Everett, Jim	QB	6-5	212	1/3/63	11	Purdue
5	Shuler, Heath	QB	6-2	216	12/31/71	3	Tennessee

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
69	Ackerman, Tom	C	6-3	291	9/6/72	1	Eastern Washington
62	Gammon, Kendall	C	6-4	288	10/23/68	5	Pittsburg State
76	Hills, Keno	T	6-6	305	6/13/73	1	Southwestern Louisiana
74	Jones, Clarence	T	6-6	280	5/6/68	6	Maryland
67	McCollum, Andy	G	6-4	295	6/6/70	2	Toledo
77	Roaf, William	T	6-5	300	4/18/70	4	Louisiana Tech
66	Verstegen, Mike	T	6-6	311	10/24/71	2	Wisconsin
63	Willis, Donald	G	6-3	330	7/15/73	2	North Carolina A&T

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
40	Bender, Wes	RB	5-10	230	8/2/70	3	Southern California
32	Hunter, Earnest	RB	5-8	201	12/21/70	1	SE Oklahoma State
41	McCrary, Fred	RB	6-1	219	09/19/72	2	Mississippi State
23	Whittle, Ricky	RB	5-9	200	12/21/71	1	Oregon
34	Zellers, Ray	RB	5-11	233	3/25/73	2	Notre Dame

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Barnes, Johnnie	WR	6-1	185	7/21/68	5 Hampton
19	Bech, Brett	WR	6-1	184	8/20/71	1 Louisiana State
87	DeRamus, Lee	WR	6-1	205	8/24/72	2 Wisconsin
85	Green, Paul	TE	6-3	253	10/8/66	5 Southern California
18	Guess, Terry	WR	6-1	200	9/22/74	1 Gardner-Webb
89	Hayes, Mercury	WR	5-11	195	1/1/73	1 Michigan
81	Haynes, Michael	WR	6-1	184	12/24/65	9 Northern Arizona
80	Hobbs, Daryl	WR	6-2	175	5/23/68	4 Pacific
80	Jeffries, Haywood	WR	6-2	201	12/12/64	10 North Carolina State
86	Johnson, Tony	TE	6-5	255	2/5/72	1 Alabama
88	Lusk, Henry	TE	6-1	240	5/8/72	1 Utah
83	Small, Torrance	WR	6-3	201	9/6/70	5 Alcorn State
82	Smith, Irv	TE	6-3	246	10/13/71	4 Notre Dame

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
99	Broughton, Willie	NT	6-5	285	9/9/64	12	Miami (FL)
94	Johnson, Joe	DE	6-4	270	7/11/72	3	Louisville
61	King, Ed*	G	6-4	300	12/3/69	6	Auburn
93	Martin, Wayne	DT	6-5	275	10/26/65	8	Arkansas
92	Mickell, Darren	DE	6-4	284	8/3/70	5	Florida
73	O'Brien, Joe	DT	6-2	250	11/16/72	1	Boise State
75	Palmer, Emile	DT	6-3	320	4/5/73	1	Syracuse
91	Smith, Brady	DE	6-5	260	6/5/73	1	Colorado State
71	Stokes, Fred	DE	6-3	274	3/14/64	10	Georgia Southern
97	Turnbull, Renaldo	DE	6-4	250	1/5/66	7	West Virginia

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
43	Adams, Vashone	S	5-10	196	9/12/73	2 Eastern Michigan
21	Allen, Eric	CB	5-10	180	11/22/65	9 Arizona State
21	Carter, Eric	CB	6-1	195	1/23/69	1 Knoxville College
37	Cherry, Je'Rod	S	6-1	196	5/30/73	1 California
23	Duckett, Forey	CB	6-3	195	2/5/70	3 Nevada
28	Hoskins, Derrick	S	6-2	210	11/14/70	5 Southern Mississippi
29	McMillian, Mark	CB	5-7	148	4/29/70	5 Alabama
25	Molden, Alex	CB	5-10	190	8/4/73	1 Oregon
30	Newman, Anthony	S	6-1	199	11/21/65	9 Oregon
41	Strong, William	CB	5-10	191	11/3/71	2 North Carolina State

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
55	Fields, Mark	LB	6-2	244	11/9/72	2 Washington State
53	Sims, William	LB	6-3	265	12/30/70	3 Southwestern Louisiana

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
14	Edge, Shayne	P	5-11	174	8/21/71	1	Florida

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
24	Bates, Mario	RB	6-1	217	1/16/73	4	Arizona State
10	Brien, Doug	K	6-0	180	11/24/70	4	California
20	Brown, Derek*	RB	5-9	205	4/15/71	5	Nebraska
45	Byrd, Israel*	CB	5-11	184	2/1/71	2	Utah State
53	Davis, Don*	LB	6-1	240	12/17/72	2	Kansas
56	Dixon, Ernest*	LB	6-1	240	10/17/71	4	South Carolina
47	Jackson, Greg*	S	6-1	205	8/20/66	9	LSU
58	Jones, Brian	LB	6-1	250	1/22/68	4	Texas
60	Novitsky, Craig*	C	6-5	295	5/12/71	4	UCLA
13	Nussmeier, Doug	QB	6-3	211	12/11/70	4	Idaho
84	Rhem, Steve*	WR	6-2	212	11/9/71	3	Minnesota
95	Robbins, Austin	DT	6-6	290	3/1/71	4	North Carolina
54	Tubbs, Winfred	LB	6-4	250	9/24/70	4	Texas
4	Wilmsmeyer, Klaus*	P	6-1	210	12/4/67	6	Louisville

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	10	Chris Naeole	G	6-3	313	Colorado
2	33	Rob Kelly	DB	6-0	199	Ohio State
2	39	Jared Tomich	DE	6-2	258	Nebraska
3	62	Troy Davis	RB	5-7	191	Iowa State
4	99	Danny Wuerffel	QB	6-1	212	Florida
4	116	Keith Poole	WR	6-0	188	Arizona State
6	165	Nicky Savoie	TE	6-5	253	Louisiana State

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The Falcons, struggling for respectability, are needy almost everywhere they look.

The Falcons signed free agent Chris Chandler.



Jamal Anderson (below) averaged 4.5 yards per carry for Atlanta.

Doomed from the day quarterback Jeff George yelled at coach June Jones on the sidelines in the third week last season, the Falcons seem far removed from their 1995 playoff appearance. The franchise has never had successive winning seasons. Hiring the winningest active coach, Dan Reeves, isn't going to mean a quick fix.

Return of the Native

Reeves is a Georgia native hired to help the Smith family fill the Georgia Dome. This is a new challenge for Reeves, who always worked in front of packed houses in Dallas, Denver, and New York. In Atlanta, the most excitement on the horizon looks to be Week 3, September 14, against the Oakland Raiders, when fans may be curious enough to show up and boo the return of George, the defeated villain.

There doesn't appear to be much else to cheer for. The Falcons are essentially a team of has-beens and rejects struggling for respectability. You can picture Reeves starting from square one, as in the old Vince Lombardi story: "Gentlemen, this is a football."

The Falcons are needy almost everywhere they look. Reeves has called plays and run the offense wherever he has coached, but the Giants fell from 17th to 30th last year, not a good recommendation. He is going to revamp the offense, dumping the run-and-shoot.

Caught in the Draft

The defense is awful, 29th in yardage allowed and last in yielding points. It gave up 26 touchdown passes and had just six interceptions, so signing Colts' free-agent cornerback Ray Buchanan was the first order of business. Since adding one cornerback wasn't enough, Reeves used his first draft choice for Nebraska's Michael Booker.

Because the Falcons are notoriously weak up front, Reeves used his second draft choice to take Indiana defensive tackle Nathan Davis, who might play as a 300-pounder, which would be a Falcon first. But Reeves had to address the offense with his

next two picks because he is going to a more conventional set. He took running back Byron Hanspard, even though Jamal Anderson is his best player. He took tight end O.J. Santiago because the run-and-shoot did not have any tight ends. He had signed blocking tight end Ed West as a free agent, but one isn't enough.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	319.8	17
Passing	228.4	9
Rushing	91.3	27
Scoring	19.3	19
Punting	42.0	T20
Punt Returns	10.2	13
Kick Returns	21.0	23
Total Defense	361.6	29
Against Pass	234.1	27
Against Run	127.6	26
Points Allowed	28.8	30
Interceptions	6	30
Sacks	36	14

A New Offensive

Replacing George is Chris Chandler. Playing for his sixth NFL team in nine seasons, Chandler enjoyed his best success in his last stop, Houston, but lost his job to the Oilers' quarterback of the future, Steve McNair.

The Falcons have decent receivers in Terance Mathis, Bert Emanuel, and J.J. Birden, with free agent Eric Metcalf as an all-purpose threat, if he sticks around. But all of them must unlearn the distinctive patterns of the run-and-shoot and relearn conventional football.

The Falcons lost fullback Craig Heyward and added Carolina's Bobby Christian. How Anderson and Hanspard will share space is undetermined. Anderson rushed for 1,055 yards and caught 49 passes for 473 yards. He looks like he can play in any system and is the perfect cornerstone around which Reeves can build.

Hiring Art Shell to mold his offensive line was one of Reeves's best moves. It is one area where the Falcons have size, strength, and experience. Right tackle Antone Davis shows signs of realizing the potential the Eagles saw when they drafted him No. 1. Left tackle Bob Whitfield is more than solid. Robbie Tobeck is the left guard and Gene Williams will compete for right guard. Veteran Roman Fortin is the center.



the key stats

Team leaders: **Morten Andersen** (scoring, 97 points), **Bert Emanuel** (receptions, 75), **Jamal Anderson** (rushing 1,055 yards). The Falcons were last in the NFC in turnover differential (-18). They were intercepted 30 times, tops in the NFL. **Chris Chandler** completed 57.7 percent of his passes for 2,099 yards and 16 touchdowns with Houston.

Turning the Corner

The defense is now in the hands of Rich Brooks, head coach the last two years of the Rams, where the defense fell from 12th to 26th in the NFL. The Falcons are small and weak. For eight straight weeks last year, they started different cornerbacks. Although the problems couldn't have been entirely the fault of the corners, the Falcons did have 36 sacks, one fewer than the Packers. If good coverage starts with pressure



Terance Mathis (at left) and Bert Emanuel (above) combined for 144 catches for 1,695 yards and 13 touchdowns for the Falcons in '96.

up front, the defensive backs appeared to have a good start.

The Falcons hired former Detroit and Kansas City safety William White with the hope that he can man strong safety. That would allow Devin Bush to play free safety. Adding rookies Marcus Wimberly and Chris Bayne in the draft underscores the need for competition throughout the secondary.

Defensive Stalwarts

At linebacker, **Jessie Tuggle** is a stalwart in the middle, where he has led the club in tackles for eight straight years. Former Buffalo Bill **Cornelius Bennett** starts his 11th year, and Brooks hopes he still has the legs and enthusiasm to be a major factor. The other spot is up for grabs, with **Ron George** getting a challenge from **Lorenzo Styles**. Fourth-rounder **Henri Crockett** of Florida State will challenge for playing time.

Davis has a starting job waiting for him up front. Right end **Chuck Smith** led the team in quarterback pressures. Tackle **Travis Hall** is coming off a promising second season in which he finished second in tackles and sacks. Left end **Lester Archambeau** and tackle **Dan Owens** are the other starters.

There are good kickers in **Morten Andersen** and punter **Dan Stryzinski**. Metcalf is one of the game's most dangerous return men, and **Elbert Shelley** is a Pro Bowl cover man.

ATLANTA FALCONS

Dan Reeves, Executive V.P. of Football Operations/Head Coach
Rich Brooks, Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator; Harold Richardson, Assistant Head Coach/Football Operations; George Sefcik, Offensive Coordinator/Running Backs; Don Blackmon, Linebackers; James Daniel, Tight Ends; Jack Burns, Quarterbacks; Joe DeCamillis, Special Teams; Tim Jorgensen, Assistant Strength and Conditioning; Bill Kollar, Defensive Line; Pete Mangurian, Offensive Quality Control; Ron Meeks, Secondary; Al Miller, Strength and Conditioning; Art Shell, Offensive Line; Warren Simmons, Wide Receivers

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Chandler, Chris	QB	6-4	225	10/12/65	9 Washington
11	Tolliver, Billy Joe	QB	6-1	218	2/7/66	8 Texas Tech

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
73	Brooks, Ethan	T	6-6	290	4/27/72	1 Williams
76	Davis, Antone	T	6-4	330	2/28/67	6 Tennessee
65	Fortin, Roman	C	6-5	297	2/26/67	6 San Diego State
68	Loneker, Keith	G	6-3	325	6/21/71	4 Kansas
55	Miller, Nate	T	6-3	310	10/8/71	2 Louisiana State
64	Pahukoa, Jeff	G	6-2	298	2/9/69	6 Washington
61	Tobeck, Robbie	C	6-4	295	3/6/70	3 Washington State
70	Whitfield, Bob	T	6-5	310	10/18/71	5 Stanford
69	Williams, Gene	G	6-2	306	10/14/68	6 Iowa State
77	Willig, Matt	T	6-8	317	1/21/69	4 Southern California

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
32	Anderson, Jamal	RB	5-10	234	9/30/72	3 Utah
44	Christian, Bob	RB	5-11	230	11/14/68	5 Northwestern
45	Downs, Gary	RB	6-1	212	6/6/72	3 North Carolina State
33	Huntley, Richard	RB	5-11	224	9/18/72	1 Winston-Salem State
36	Lester, Fred	RB	6-1	244	8/1/71	3 Alabama A&M

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Brown, Tyrone	WR	5-11	168	1/3/73	2 Toledo
81	Kinchen, Todd	WR	5-11	187	1/7/69	5 Louisiana State
85	Kozlowski, Brian	TE	6-3	255	10/4/70	3 Connecticut
81	Mathis, Terance	WR	5-10	180	6/7/67	7 New Mexico
85	Preston, Roell	WR	5-10	185	6/23/72	2 Mississippi
84	Scott, Freddie	WR	5-10	189	8/26/74	1 Penn State
83	West, Ed	TE	6-1	250	8/2/61	13 Auburn

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
92	Archambeau, Lester	DE	6-5	275	6/27/67	7 Stanford
75	Brown, Shannon	DT	6-5	290	5/23/72	1 Alabama
91	Burrough, John	DT	6-5	275	5/17/72	2 Wyoming
98	Hall, Travis	DT	6-5	287	8/3/72	2 Brigham Young
95	Keeney, Brad	DT	6-3	294	11/20/73	1 The Citadel
96	Kelly, Todd	DE	6-2	259	11/27/70	4 Tennessee
93	Owens, Dan	NT	6-3	280	3/16/67	7 Southern California
90	Smith, Chuck	DE	6-2	262	12/21/69	5 Tennessee

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
42	Boyd, Sean	S	6-2	206	12/19/72	1 North Carolina
23	Bradford, Ronnie	CB	5-10	188	10/1/70	4 Colorado
34	Buchanan, Ray	S	5-9	195	9/29/71	4 Louisville
25	Bush, Devin	S	5-11	210	7/3/73	2 Florida State
46	Denton, Tim	CB	5-11	180	2/2/73	1 Sam Houston State
26	Phillips, Anthony	CB	6-2	209	10/5/70	3 Texas A&M-Kingsville
35	White, William	S	5-10	205	2/19/66	9 Ohio State

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
97	Bennett, Cornelius	LB	6-2	238	8/25/65	10 Alabama
52	Davis, Paschall	LB	6-2	225	7/5/69	2 Texas A&M-Kingsville
56	Fields, Scott	LB	6-2	220	4/22/73	1 Southern California
55	Fontaine, Jamal	LB	6-3	250	1/29/71	2 Washington
54	Hamilton, Ruffin	LB	6-1	238	3/2/71	3 Tulane
52	Sauer, Craig	LB	6-1	232	12/13/72	1 Minnesota
59	Styles, Lorenzo	LB	6-1	245	1/31/74	2 Ohio State
58	Tuggle, Jessie	LB	5-11	230	2/14/65	10 Valdosta State

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
5	Andersen, Morten	K	6-2	225	08/19/60	15 Michigan State
4	Stryzinski, Dan	P	6-2	200	5/15/65	7 Indiana

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP	COLLEGE
89	Birden, J.J.*	WR	5-9	170	6/16/65	9	Oregon
87	Emanuel, Bert	WR	5-10	180	10/26/70	4	Rice
67	Gardner, Moe*	DT	6-2	265	8/10/68	7	Illinois
50	George, Ron*	LB	6-2	242	3/20/70	5	Stanford
3	Hebert, Bobby*	QB	6-4	215	8/19/60	12	NW Louisiana
57	Matthews, Clay*	LB	6-2	245	3/15/56	20	Southern California
28	McGill, Lenny*	CB	6-1	198	5/31/71	4	Arizona State
21	Metcalf, Eric*	WR	5-10	188	1/23/68	9	Texas
7	Nagle, Browning*	QB	6-3	220	4/29/68	7	Louisville
38	Odomes, Nate*	CB	5-10	188	8/25/65	11	Wisconsin
29	Riddick, Louis*	S	6-2	215	3/15/69	6	Pittsburgh
37	Shelley, Elbert*	DB	5-11	190	12/24/64	11	Arkansas

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	11	Michael Booker	DB	6-2	203	Nebraska
2	32	Nathan Davis	DL	6-5	312	Indiana
2	41	Byron Hanspard	RB	5-10	198	Texas Tech
3	70	O.J. Santiago	TE	6-7	267	Kent
4	100	Henri Crockett	LB	6-2	249	Florida State
5	133	Marcus Wimberly	S	5-11	192	Miami (FL)
6	180	Calvin Collins	C	6-2	307	Texas A&M
7	204	Tony Graziani	QB	6-2	195	Oregon
7	222	Chris Bayne	S	6-1	205	Fresno State

The Patriots should repeat in the AFC East, but they will miss Bill Parcells in the playoffs.

by Larry Felser Buffalo News

Predicted order of finish



The trauma of switching coaches, from the overpowering Bill Parcells to the young Pete Carroll, might have overwhelmed the New England Patriots in the past, but this isn't a normal season for the AFC East. The rest of the division is crumbling, rebuilding, or attempting to cope with internal chaos. Consequently, the loss of Parcells hasn't been as damaging to the Patriots as it could have been. They will miss him most, however, at playoff time.

New England Patriots

To hear quarterback Drew Bledsoe tell it, not having Parcells around to nag him and his teammates will be a relief. That could be true. The Patriots are still a young team which should improve merely with experience. Bledsoe has some impressive firepower at his command, especially in wide receivers Terry Glenn and Shawn Jefferson, tight end Ben Coates, and running back Curtis Martin.

The defense went a long way on enthusiasm in the playoffs, and now, end Willie McGinest, linebackers Chris Slade and Ted Johnson, and cornerback Ty Law are ready to blossom.

Miami Dolphins

Only the presence of Dan Marino, in the midnight hour of his career, allows Miami to be spoken of in the present rather than the future tense. In his second year on the job, coach Jimmy Johnson has tempered his optimistic prophecies. He is looking ahead, to 1998 and beyond. That timetable may not mesh with the amount of productive time Marino has left.

Miami's progress largely depends upon the success of Johnson's drafts. Nine rookies came through for him last year, and he needs about that many more this fall. Miami is at least a year away from being a major player in free agency.

Buffalo Bills

Jim Kelly retired, Thurman Thomas has begun to creak, and the Buffalo offense is in turmoil.

Marv Levy brought in Dan Henning, a former head coach in Atlanta and San Diego, as offensive coordinator to clean it up. Henning will decide whether Todd Collins or ex-Raider Billy Joe Hobert will be Kelly's successor.

If Henning succeeds immediately, Buffalo could be a wild card. Their defense, still among the strongest in the league with Bruce Smith, Chris Spielman, and Bryce Paup, and their special teams give the Bills some cards to play.

Indianapolis Colts

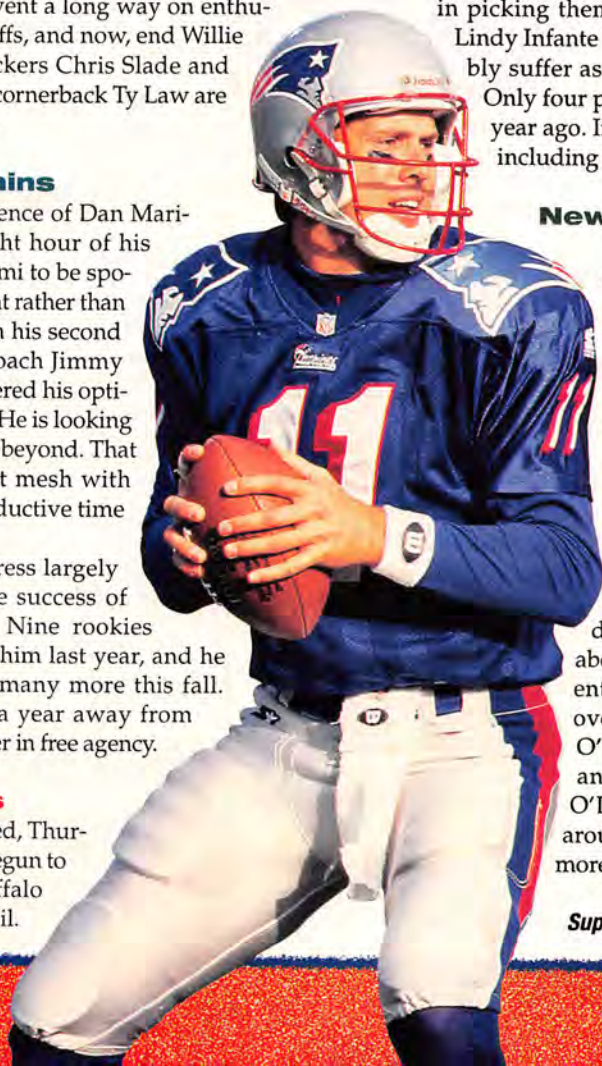
Indianapolis has suffered too many free-agent losses to remain a serious contender. There have been numerous changes in the offensive line, so the Colts haven't been able to protect their primary assets: gritty quarterback Jim Harbaugh and oft-injured running back Marshall Faulk. The team rushing fell off by 25 yards per game in '96.

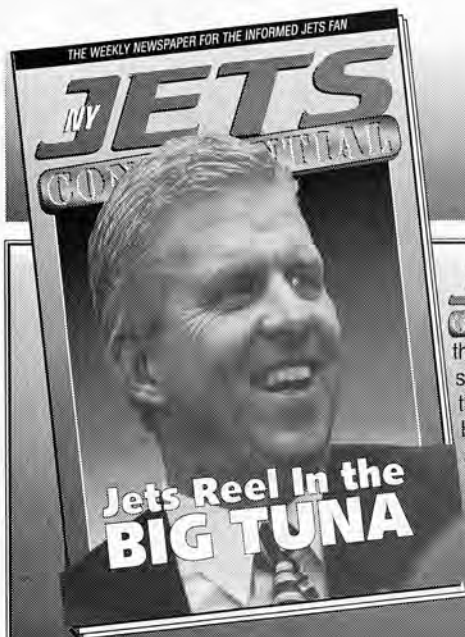
The Colts have shown a remarkable resiliency in picking themselves up, though. Coach Lindy Infante figures his team can't possibly suffer as many injuries this season. Only four players started every game a year ago. In all, 41 regulars were used, including 22 on defense.

New York Jets

Keyshawn Johnson's venomous account of his rookie year threatened to blow a hole in team unity. Parcells, however, will restore order, and the Jets might win as many as six games this year on superior coaching alone. There is some decent talent in pass rusher Hugh Douglas, running back Adrian Murrell, and cornerback Aaron Glenn, but the Jets don't know the first thing about winning. Parcells wasn't enthusiastic about inheriting overpriced quarterback Neil O'Donnell in the first place, and after Johnson trashed O'Donnell, the job of turning around the Jets became all the more difficult.

Super quarterback Drew Bledsoe.





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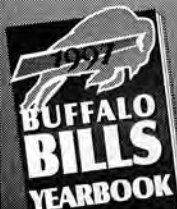
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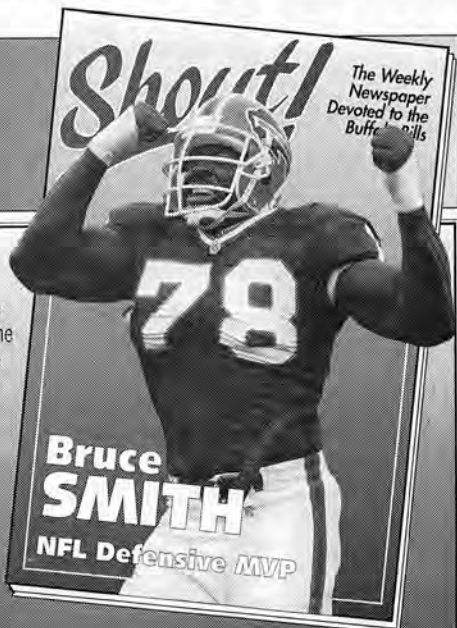
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NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS



The Patriots' offense features some young stars who play at their best in the clutch.

Linebacker **Chris Slade** (below) had a strong finish for the Patriots.



If you were a movie producer filming a remake of *The Godfather*, would you recast the role of Don Corleone with Woody Harrelson? In effect, that's what the Patriots did with their head-coaching job.

Last Thanksgiving, the Patriots weren't even a long shot for the Super Bowl. Then Buffalo began its tailspin and Bill Parcells whipped New England into first place in the AFC East. By the time the Pats reached the playoffs, their confidence was soaring.

Patriots Daze

Parcells has taken his act to the New York Jets and the Patriots are in the hands of former Jets coach **Pete Carroll**. The suspicion here is that Carroll was hired because team owner Bob Kraft, after wrestling with Parcells for more than a year, was looking for someone he could control.

The Patriots won the division with a finishing kick that did not test them beyond their limits. They beat the Colts, Chargers, Jets, and Giants while losing only to the Cowboys to close out the regular season. They won in the playoffs with strong defense. Preparation and coaching were also large factors in getting them to the Super Bowl.

Clutch Players

The offense features young stars who play at their best in the clutch. Quarterback **Drew Bledsoe** made a "good riddance" statement about Parcells after the coach's departure, but Bledsoe remains an unpolished gem. He threw for 27 touchdowns and 4,086 yards, but he doesn't protect the ball well enough. He needed Parcells's nagging.

Terry Glenn is the reluctant legacy of Parcells,

who didn't want to draft him. But the Patriots wouldn't have made it to the Super Bowl without Glenn's 90 receptions, a rookie record. Tight end **Ben Coates**'s 62 catches and 682 yards were his lowest numbers in three seasons, but he had a career-best nine touchdowns. **Shawn Jefferson** had four receptions for 91 yards in the AFC title game. **Vincent Brisby**, the Pats' leading receiver in 1995, could resurface.

Rush Hour

Curtis Martin scored more rushing touchdowns (14) than anyone in the AFC and finished with 1,152 yards. Tough-guy full-back **Sam Gash** returns. At 34, **Keith Byars** can't be expected to come up as big as he did in the postseason. **Dave Meggett** still explodes as a punt returner, which sent him to the Pro Bowl, but not as a third-down back. He also fumbled seven times, too much for a part-timer.

Left tackle **Bruce Armstrong** was especially valuable down the stretch and went to the Pro Bowl, but the Packers' **Reggie White** made right tackle **Max Lane** ineffective in the Super Bowl, so a change is likely. Ex-Lion **Zefross Moss** may be the man. Lane moves to left guard, with **Todd Rucci** at right guard. Center **Dave Wohlabaugh**, a starter since his rookie year in 1995, is learning to deal with inside linebackers.

Line of Defense

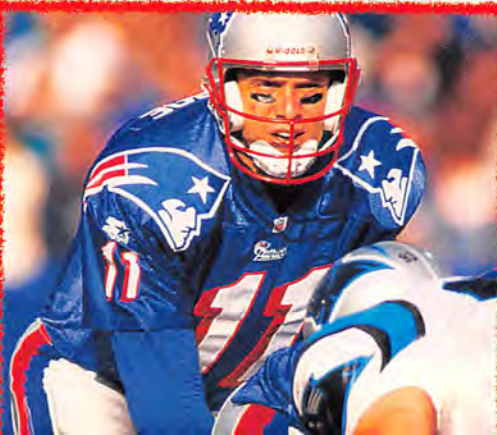
The Patriots allowed 22 points or more in nine games, yet they were a different, stingier bunch in the last five weeks of the regular season and in the AFC playoffs. It may be a matter of chemistry, with more good play to come. **Willie McGinest**, who bounced around from linebacker to end, finally set-

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	335.6	7
Passing	243.8	3
Rushing	91.8	26
Scoring	26.1	2
Punting	43.2	T12
Punt Returns	11.3	T7
Kick Returns	22.3	12
Total Defense	331.6	19
Against Pass	237.7	28
Against Run	93.9	6
Points Allowed	19.6	14
Interceptions	23	T4
Sacks	33	T19

On the offensive (below, left to right): Patriots **Terry Glenn**, **Drew Bledsoe**, and **Ben Coates**.



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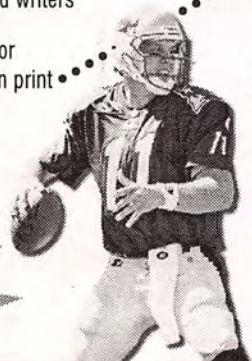
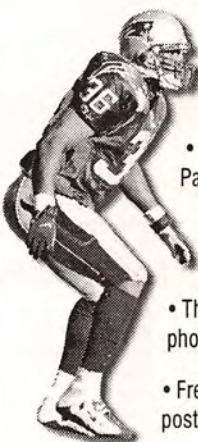
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the key stats

Drew Bledsoe had the lowest interception percentage (2.4) in the AFC and the most pass attempts (623) and completions (373) in the league. Once inside the opponents' 20-yard line, the Pats scored an NFL-high 303 points. **Curtis Martin** was third in the league with 91 first downs. **Dave Meggett** had the most punt-return yards (588) in the AFC.



Curtis Martin (above) gave New England a rush with 14 TDs.

tled in at right end. Tackles **Mark Wheeler** and **Pio Sagapolutele**, signed as free agents, throttled opposing running games. Left end **Ferric Collons**, with his fifth team in three years, suddenly became a tough interior pass rusher. The Pats had to match Philly's offer sheet to keep him. Texas A&M defensive tackle **Brandon Mitchell** has promise.

Coming On

Blitzing linebacker **Chris Slade** roared toward the end of the season, finishing second to McGinest in sacks. Middle linebacker **Ted Johnson** is a coming star, a run killer who may have an expanded role under Carroll. Parcells took him off the field in passing situations, preferring to use seven defensive backs. Linebacker is well-protected with **Todd Collins**, free agent **James Williams**, **Dwayne Saab**, and pass-rush demon **Tedy Bruschi**.

After Otis Smith was burned by Green Bay in the Super Bowl, something had to be done at right corner. The Patriots signed **Steve Israel** and drafted Kansas State cornerback **Chris Canty** in the first round. Left corner **Ty Law** is the best deep back. Strong safety **Lawyer Milloy** was a factor in the improved defense against the run. Free safety **Willie Clay** made the big interception in the AFC championship game victory over Jacksonville. Texas safety **Chris Carter** should help. In the final seven regular-season games, the Pats had 12 interceptions and allowed just five touchdown passes.

Special Play

New England forced more punts than any AFC team and limited kickoff returns to just past the 24-yard line, tied for best in the AFC. The Pats' own average drive began on the 30, tops in the conference. **Adam Vinatieri** made nine of his last 10 field goals. Punter **Tom Tupa** made a major improvement.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Pete Carroll, Head Coach

Larry Kennan, Offensive Coordinator; Steve Sidwell, Defensive Coordinator; Paul Boudreau, Offensive Line; Jeff Davidson, Tight Ends; Ray Hamilton, Defensive Line; Ron Lynn, Secondary; Johnny Parker, Strength and Conditioning; Andre Patterson, Defensive Assistant; Bo Pellini, Linebackers; Dante Scamecchia, Special Teams; Carl Smith, Quarterbacks; Steve Walters, Wide Receivers; Kirby Wilson, Running Backs

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Bledsoe, Drew	QB	6-5	233	2/14/72	4	Washington State
16	Zolak, Scott	QB	6-5	235	12/13/67	5	Maryland

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
78	Armstrong, Bruce	T	6-4	295	9/7/65	10	Louisville
70	Conrad, J.R.	T	6-3	300	2/2/74	1	Oklahoma
67	Gisler, Mike	C	6-4	300	8/26/69	4	Houston
63	Irwin, Heath	G	6-4	300	6/27/73	1	Colorado
71	Moss, Zefross	T	6-6	324	8/17/66	8	Alabama State
77	Rucci, Todd	G	6-5	291	7/14/70	4	Penn State
64	Wohlabaugh, Dave	C	6-3	292	4/13/72	2	Syracuse

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
46	Barber, Kantroy	RB	6-1	243	10/4/73	1	West Virginia
41	Byars, Keith	RB	6-1	255	10/14/63	11	Ohio State
33	Gash, Sam	RB	6-1	235	3/7/69	5	Penn State
34	Grant, Rupert	RB	6-1	233	11/5/73	2	Howard
35	Grier, Marrio	RB	5-10	225	12/5/71	1	UT-Chattanooga
28	Martin, Curtis	RB	5-11	203	5/1/73	2	Pittsburgh
22	Meggett, David	RB	5-7	195	4/30/66	8	Towson State

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Bartrum, Mike	TE	6-4	245	6/23/70	4 Marshall
82	Brisby, Vincent	WR	6-2	188	1/25/71	4 Northeast Louisiana
80	Brown, Troy	WR	5-9	190	7/2/71	4 Marshall
87	Coates, Ben	TE	6-5	245	8/16/69	6 Livingstone College
88	Glenn, Terry	WR	5-10	184	7/23/74	1 Ohio State
81	Graham, Hason	WR	5-10	176	3/21/71	2 Georgia
84	Jefferson, Shawn	WR	5-11	180	2/22/69	6 Central Florida
83	Jells, Dietrich	WR	5-10	186	4/11/72	1 Pittsburgh
15	Lucas, Ray	WR	6-2	201	8/6/72	1 Rutgers
48	Purnell, Lovett	TE	6-2	250	4/7/72	1 West Virginia
89	Ryans, Larry	WR	5-11	182	7/28/71	3 Clemson

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
92	Collons, Ferric	DE	6-6	285	12/4/69	2	California
90	Eaton, Chad	DT	6-4	292	4/4/72	2	Washington State
92	Heinrich-Taves, Josh	DE	6-7	260	5/13/72	2	Northeastern
96	Jones, Mike	DE	6-4	280	8/25/69	6	North Carolina State
55	McGinest, Willie	DE	6-5	255	12/11/71	3	Southern California
75	Sagapolutele, Pio	DT	6-6	297	11/28/69	6	San Diego State
74	Sullivan, Chris	DE	6-4	279	3/14/73	1	Boston College
97	Wheeler, Mark	DT	6-3	285	4/1/70	5	Texas A&M
72	Wyman, Devin	DT	6-7	307	8/29/73	1	Kentucky State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
30	Brown, Corwin	S	6-1	200	4/25/70	4	Michigan
32	Clay, Willie	S	5-10	198	9/5/70	5	Georgia Tech
31	Hitchcock, Jimmy	CB	5-10	188	11/9/71	2	North Carolina
31	Israel, Steve	CB	5-11	186	3/16/69	5	Pittsburgh
24	Law, Ty	CB	5-11	196	2/10/74	2	Michigan
27	McGruder, Michael	CB	5-10	178	5/6/64	8	Kent State
36	Milloy, Lawyer	S	6-1	208	11/14/73	1	Washington
25	Whigham, Larry	S	6-2	202	6/23/72	3	Northeast Louisiana

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Abrams, Bobby	LB	6-4	242	4/12/67	7	Michigan
93	Brown, Monty	LB	6-1	240	4/13/70	4	Ferris State
54	Bruschi, Tedy	LB	6-1	245	6/9/73	1	Arizona
59	Collins, Todd	LB	6-2	242	5/27/70	5	Carson-Newman
52	Johnson, Ted	LB	6-3	240	12/4/72	2	Colorado
53	Slade, Chris	LB	6-5	245	1/30/71	4	Virginia
40	Williams, James	LB	6-1	240	10/10/68	7	Mississippi State

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
19	Tupa, Tom	P	6-4	220	2/6/66	9	Ohio State
4	Vinatieri, Adam	K	6-1	200	12/28/72	1	South Dakota State

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
85	Burke, John	TE	6-3	248	9/7/71	3	Virginia Tech
68	Lane, Max	T	6-6	305	2/22/71	3	Navy
43	Lewis, Vernon*	CB	5-10	192	10/27/70	4	Pittsburgh
58	Moore, Marty	LB	6-1	244	3/19/71	3	Kentucky
23	Ray, Terry*	S	6-1	205	10/12/69	5	Oklahoma
21	Reynolds, Ricky*	CB	5-11	190	1/19/65	10	Washington State
62	Richards, David*	T	6-5	315	4/11/66	9	UCLA
76	Roberts, William*	G	6-5	298	8/5/62	13	Ohio State
95	Sabb, Dwayne*	LB	6-4	248	10/9/69	5	New Hampshire
45	Smith, Otis*	CB	5-11	190	10/22/65	7	Missouri

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	29	Chris Canty	DB	5-9	194	Kansas State
2	59	Brandon Mitchell	DT	6-3	289	Texas A&M
3	61	Sedrick Shaw	RB	6-0	214	Iowa
3	89	Chris Carter	S	6-1	201	Texas
4	97	Damon Denson	G	6-3	304	Michigan
4	125	Ed Ellis	T	6-7	340	Buffalo
5	159	Vernon Crawford	LB	6-3	250	Florida State
6	192	Tony Gaiter	WR	5-8	169	Miami
7	230	Scott Rehberg	T	6-8	336	Central Michigan

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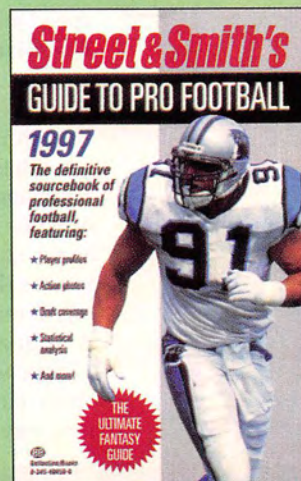
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The Dolphins are an overachieving bunch led by a future Hall of Fame quarterback.

Quarterback Dan Marino (below) hopes to lead a young Miami team back to the playoffs.

If Don Shula had staggered to an 8-8 record and missed the playoffs, as **Jimmy Johnson** did in his first year with the Dolphins, the Miami fans would have cried for the head of the legendary coach. But they're still spreading palm fronds in Johnson's path because he changed the subject in Miami, as well as the attitude.

Youth Movement

It took a finishing kick with victories over slumping Buffalo and the inept Jets to push the Dolphins to .500, but Johnson did it with nine rookies on his roster, delivering on his promise to build with the draft and with young veterans who agree to do it his way.

Gone are the brash pronouncements about "We're the team to beat," Johnson says he needs a few more good drafts. He is one of those rare coaches who also has a gifted eye for talent. In the third round of last year's draft he chose a running back, **Karim Abdul-Jabbar**, who became Miami's first 1,000-yard runner since 1978. In the fifth round came **Zach Thomas**, an undersized middle linebacker who has a nose for the ball.

At least two '97 rookies should help immediately. Cornerback **Sam Madison** of Louisville will play somewhere and defensive end **Jason Taylor** of Akron, gifted enough athletically to have played college basketball, may be Johnson's new Charles Haley. The first-round pick, Miami wide receiver **Yatil Green**, like most of Johnson's choices, has speed and big-play potential. Still, he may drive **Dan Marino** crazy before he becomes polished.

Passing the Torch

Johnson is a long way from where he wants to be with the Dolphins. Right now they are an overachieving bunch of enthusiasts led by a future Hall of Fame quarterback. Marino is 36. He got hurt again, suffering a fractured ankle that caused him to miss three games. He had the third-highest rating in the conference (87.8), but there were seven AFC quarterbacks who passed for more than his 17 touchdowns. This is no longer Marino's aerial show. He cooperated with Johnson in the coach's new way of doing things. There was no more aban-

donment of the running game. No more trying to win games all by himself. Marino even did some running in training camp.

Johnson acquired **Craig Erickson** as an insurance policy for Marino. It was Erickson who quarterbacked the first victory over Buffalo, a watershed game in the Johnson era. The Dolphins swept the Bills, a team which had dominated them for a decade, especially in late-season games. In fact Miami had a 6-2 record in the AFC East, a division that produced three playoff teams.

"I learned that if you're going to have success in this league, you're going to have to have success in your division," says Johnson. "Our record matched New England's and was better than anyone else's." Dominating the AFC East would help even more this season since the Dolphins' out-of-division schedule includes only one opponent which made the playoffs: Super Bowl champion Green Bay.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	322.8	14
Passing	221.4	11
Rushing	101.4	19
Scoring	21.2	13
Punting	46.3	1
Punt Returns	9.7	15
Kick Returns	22.0	15
Total Defense	324.4	17
Against Pass	228.4	24
Against Run	96.0	7
Points Allowed	20.3	17
Interceptions	20	T12
Sacks	37	T10

Recipe for Turnovers

Johnson swept away a lot of high-priced talent in remaking his squad, but what remained was an inexperienced team that did not beat itself very often. The Dolphins were +12 in turnovers, the first time they have been on the plus side since 1984. The free-agent market was explored gingerly, since Miami is weighted down with salary-cap commitments to departed players.

Stanley Pritchett turned out to be the Dallas-

On line: Miami's **Richmond Webb** (at right, below).

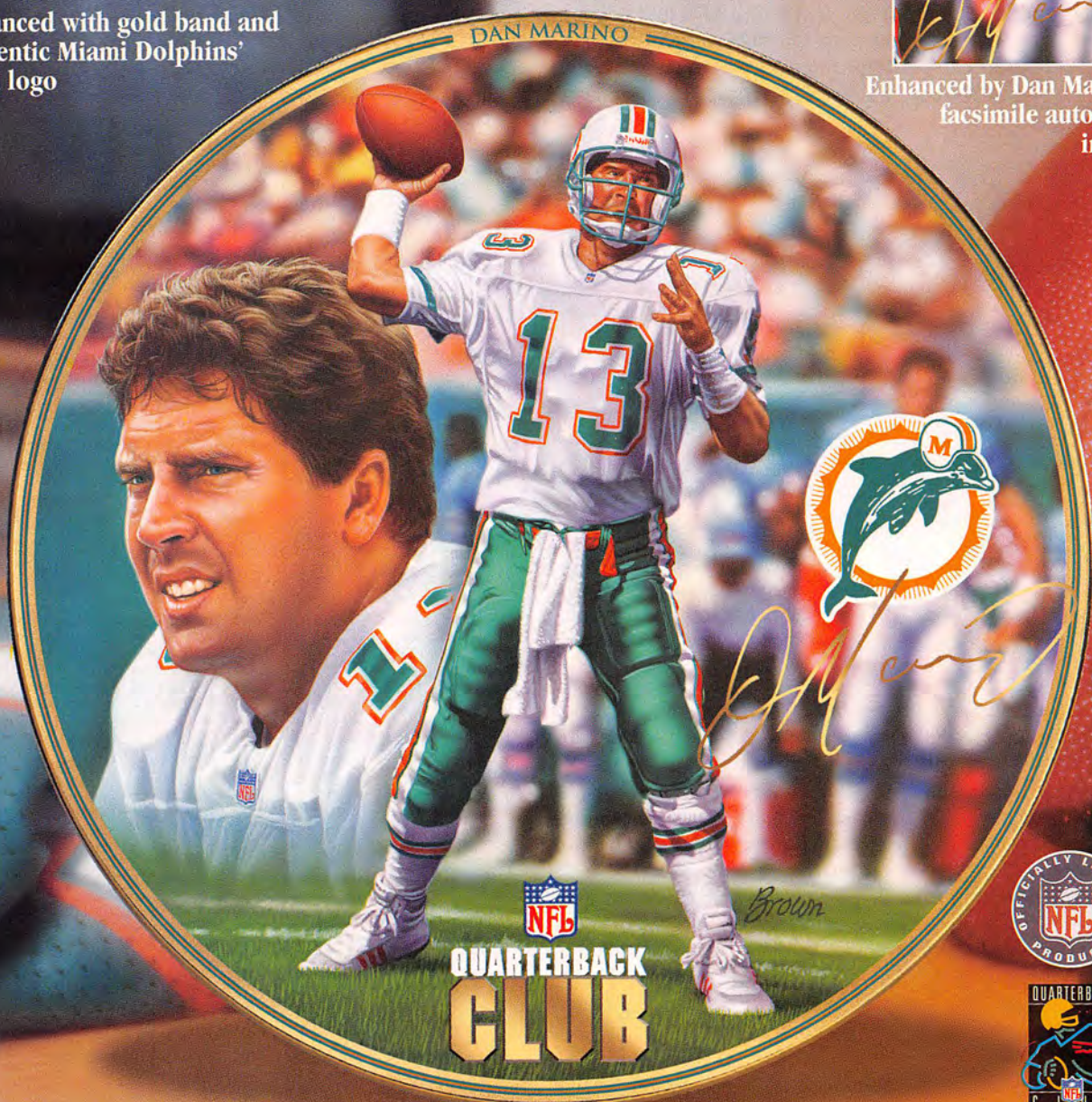


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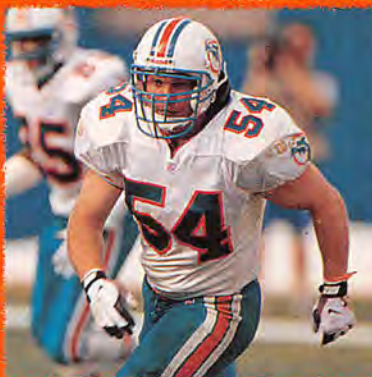
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the key stats

The Dolphins were first in the NFL in touchdown percentage (62) inside the red zone. **Dan Marino** had the lowest interception percentage (2.4) in the AFC last season. **Louis Oliver** had a league-high 4 fumble recoveries. **John Kidd** led the NFL in punting with a 46.3-yard average. **Joe Nedney** was the Dolphins' leading scorer (89 points).



The Dolphins came up with two solid rookie starters in running back Karim Abdul-Jabbar (at left) and middle linebacker Zach Thomas (above).

type fullback Johnson was seeking. He did yeoman blocking for fellow rookie Abdul-Jabbar and caught 33 passes. The Dolphins need a better year from the left side of their line: veteran tackle Richmond Webb and guard Keith Sims. There were times when they rested on their reputations. Tim Ruddy is settled comfortably as the center. Look for Jeff Buckey to duel Chris Gray for right guard or maybe James Brown for right tackle.

Fred Barnett, the ex-Eagle, came back from an injury to average 15.6 yards on his 36 catches. O.J. McDuffie had a career year with 74 receptions. Tight end Troy Drayton will be a Dolphin from the start. He came from St. Louis in mid-season and caught a total of 28 passes.

Coming in Waves

Just as he did in Dallas, Johnson plays waves of defensive linemen. Dealing with fresh tackles like Tim Bowens, Daryl Gardener, and Shane Burton takes a toll on opposing linemen. Left end Trace Armstrong knew he was in jeopardy last season and responded with a dozen sacks. Re-signing right end Daniel Stubbs, who had nine sacks, was a priority.

There should be three new starters in the secondary, with ex-Cowboy left cornerback Clayton Holmes joining safeties George Teague and Corey Harris. The sole returnee will be Terrell Buckley, who played much better as a Dolphin than he did as a Packer. The most worrisome area is linebacker, where only Thomas has a long-term future. Anthony Harris is the weakside linebacker for now. Same with Dwight Hollier on the strong side.

Kick Returns

John Kidd (46.3-yard average) led the league in punting. Joe Nedney's strong kickoffs did not compensate for the worst field-goal percentage in the NFL (.621 on 18 for 29).

MIAMI DOLPHINS

Jimmy Johnson, Head Coach

Gary Stevens, Offensive Coordinator; George Hill, Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers; Larry Beightol, Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Line; Kippy Brown, Running Backs; Joel Collier, Defensive Assistant; John Gamble, Strength and Conditioning; Cary Godette, Defensive Line; Pat Jones, Tight Ends; Les Koenning, Offensive Assistant; Bill Lewis, Defensive Nickel Package; Rich McGeorge, Assistant Offensive Line; Mel Phillips, Defensive Backs; Brad Roll, Assistant Strength and Conditioning; Larry Seiple, Wide Receivers; Mike Westhoff, Special Teams

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
7	Erickson, Craig	QB	6-2	209	5/17/69	5 Miami
13	Marino, Dan	QB	6-4	224	9/15/61	14 Pittsburgh

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
60	Bock, John	G	6-3	295	2/11/71	2 Indiana State
77	Brothen, Kevin	C	6-1	293	11/16/69	3 Vanderbilt
76	Brown, James	T	6-6	329	1/3/70	4 Virginia State
77	Buckey, Jeff	G	6-5	300	8/7/74	1 Stanford
63	Dixon, Cal	G	6-4	302	10/11/69	5 Florida
62	Elmore, John	G	6-3	302	3/2/73	1 Texas
62	Gray, Chris	G	6-4	296	06/19/70	4 Auburn
66	McIver, Everette	G	6-6	315	8/5/70	3 Elizabeth City State
61	Ruddy, Tim	C	6-3	290	4/27/72	3 Notre Dame
71	Sheldon, Mike	T	6-4	295	6/8/73	1 Grand Valley State
69	Sims, Keith	G	6-3	309	6/17/67	7 Iowa State
78	Webb, Richmond	T	6-6	303	1/11/67	7 Texas A&M
60	Weidner, Bert	C	6-2	298	1/20/66	7 Kent State

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
33	Abdul-Jabbar, Karim	RB	5-10	194	6/28/74	1 UCLA
28	Bennett, Brandon	RB	5-11	210	2/3/73	1 South Carolina
48	McClinton, Lee	RB	5-11	252	8/2/72	2 New Hampshire
32	McPhail, Jerris	RB	5-11	201	6/26/72	1 East Carolina
30	Parmalee, Bernie	RB	5-11	196	9/16/67	5 Ball State
36	Pritchett, Stanley	RB	6-1	232	12/22/73	1 South Carolina
40	Spikes, Irving	RB	5-8	206	12/21/70	3 Northeast Louisiana
49	Wilson, Robert	RB	6-1	255	1/13/69	6 Texas A&M

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Barnett, Fred	WR	6-1	199	6/17/66	7 Arkansas State
86	Carolan, Brett	TE	6-3	241	3/16/71	3 Washington State
87	Dar Dar, Kirby	WR	5-9	183	3/27/72	2 Syracuse
88	Dawsey, Lawrence	WR	6-1	192	11/16/67	6 Florida State
84	Drayton, Troy	TE	6-3	255	6/29/70	4 Penn State
19	Frazier, Daryl	WR	6-1	181	1/23/71	2 Florida
88	Jordan, Charles	WR	5-11	183	10/9/69	3 Long Beach City
81	McDuffie, O.J.	WR	5-10	188	12/2/69	4 Penn State
46	Reeves, Walter	TE	6-4	270	12/16/65	8 Auburn
85	Thomas, Lamar	WR	6-2	173	2/12/70	4 Miami
82	Wainright, Frank	TE	6-3	245	10/10/67	6 Northern Colorado
18	Williams, Tyrone	WR	6-5	220	3/26/70	4 Western Ontario

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Armstrong, Trace	DE	6-4	266	10/5/65	8 Florida
95	Bowens, Tim	DT	6-4	310	2/7/73	3 Mississippi
75	Burton, Shane	DE	6-6	300	1/18/74	1 Tennessee
91	Cross, Jeff	DE	6-4	280	3/25/66	9 Missouri
92	Gardener, Daryl	DT	6-6	315	2/25/73	1 Baylor
98	Hand, Norman	DT	6-3	329	9/4/72	2 Mississippi
78	Jackson, Larry	DE	6-3	262	10/7/71	2 Texas A&M
96	Stubbs, Daniel	DE	6-4	272	1/3/65	9 Miami
97	Sturgis, Oscar	DE	6-5	278	1/12/71	2 North Carolina

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
27	Buckley, Terrell	CB	5-9	176	6/7/71	5 Florida State
41	Davis, Cedric	CB	5-9	170	9/7/72	2 Tennessee State
30	Harris, Corey	CB	5-11	199	10/25/69	5 Vanderbilt
31	Hill, Sean	CB	5-10	179	8/14/71	3 Montana State
47	Holmes, Clayton	CB	5-10	181	8/23/69	5 Carson-Newman
38	Jackson, Calvin	CB	5-9	185	10/28/72	3 Auburn
30	Teague, George	S	6-1	195	2/18/71	4 Alabama
24	Wilson, Jerry	CB	5-10	184	7/17/73	2 Southern
22	Wooden, Shawn	CB	5-11	186	10/23/73	1 Notre Dame

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Brigance, O.J.	LB	6-1	223	9/29/69	1 Rice
51	Harris, Anthony	LB	6-1	224	1/25/73	1 Auburn
50	Hollier, Dwight	LB	6-2	250	4/21/69	5 North Carolina
53	Izzo, Larry	LB	5-10	220	9/26/74	1 Rice
54	Thomas, Zach	LB	5-11	231	9/1/73	1 Texas Tech

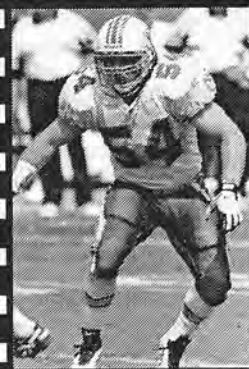
#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Kidd, John	P	6-3	214	8/22/61	13 Northwestern
6	Nedney, Joe	K	6-4	205	3/22/73	1 San Jose State

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP	COLLEGE
89	Hill, Randal	WR	5-10	180	9/21/69	6	Miami
25	Oliver, Louis*	S	6-2	224	3/9/66	8	Florida
35	Stewart, Michael*	S	5-11	202	7/12/65	10	Fresno State

* Unrestricted Free Agent

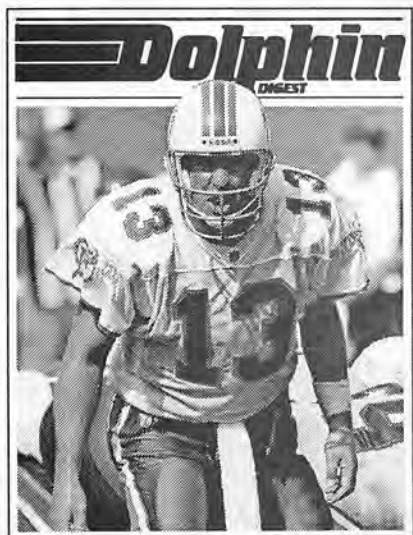
THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	15	Yatil Green	WR	6-2	205	Miami
2	44	Sam Madison	DB	5-11	180	Louisville
3	73	Jason Taylor	DE	6-6	243	Akron
3	92	Derrick Rodgers	LB	6-1	223	Arizona State
3	93	Ronnie Ward	LB	6-0	225	Kansas
3	96	Brent Smith	T	6-5	300	Mississippi State
4	121	Jerome Daniels	G	6-5	355	Northeastern
5	149	Barron Tanner	DT	6-3	318	Oklahoma
5	157	Nicholas Lopez	DE	6-4	250	Texas Southern
6	166	John Fiala	LB	6-1	230	Washington
6	170	Brian Manning	WR	5-11	180	Stanford
6	173	Mike Crawford	LB	6-1	230	Nevada
6	177	Ed Perry	TE	6-4	245	James Madison
7	203	Hudhaifa Ismaeli	DB	5-11	197	Northwestern



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The collapse of the Bills' offense wore down their defense, which now carries the team.

Buffalo's Marv Levy, at age 72, is the dean of NFL coaches. Levy hasn't changed, but the Bills have. After the end of last season, long-time quarterback Jim Kelly retired. So did Kent Hull, the veteran center who was the leader in the dressing room. **Thurman Thomas**, the esteemed running back, has a new role.

Passing Concerns

The Bills' offense is in a mess. For the first time in the Levy era, there will be a quarterback derby to determine who the starter will be. In one corner is the quiet, soft-spoken **Todd Collins**. In the other is the wisecracking, last-to-leave-the-party **Billy Joe Hobert**, the ex-Raider. Buffalo beat Dallas and Indianapolis with Collins at quarterback last year after Kelly was hurt, but Collins was under tight control in both games. Overall, he completed over 55 percent of his passes for 739 yards.

But the Bills have lusted after Hobert since he came out of the University of Washington, where he shared the quarterback job with Jacksonville's Mark Brunell, in 1993. The Bills like Hobert's size, attitude, and strong arm. As a kid Raider, he got off on the wrong foot, angering teammate **Howie Long** during practice by intentionally drawing the veteran offside with his cadence. Hobert ended up looking through the ear hole in his helmet. He never did get untracked, losing all five of the games he started. His stats last season were comparable to Collins's: over 54 percent completion rate for 667 yards.

Whoever wins the quarterback job will have some formidable receivers. **Andre Reed** made an impressive comeback from an injury and had 66 catches for 1,036 yards. **Quinn Early** had the longest reception in the league a year ago (95 yards), and almost half of his 50 catches came on third down. One of Levy's major projects will be to get the ball to the electrifying **Eric Moulds** more frequently. He had a 97-yard kickoff return for a touch-

down last season. Tight end **Lonnie Johnson**, whose inconsistencies exasperated Kelly, still caught 46 passes and could become a larger factor.

Running Start

The Bills' largest task is to rebuild their running game. Thomas finished with his eighth consecutive 1,000-yard season, but the fact is, he is no longer an every-down back. His future role should resemble that of **Marcus Allen** in Kansas City. Buffalo got the man it wanted in the draft, **Antowain Smith**, a big running back from the University of Houston, who is scheduled to get the ball 20 to 25

times per game as a rookie.

Levy hired **Dan Henning** to restructure the offense. **Tom Bresnahan**, demoted from offensive coordinator, is charged with getting more out of the line. None of the starters had a good year, including left guard **Ruben Brown**, who went to the Pro Bowl, mostly on the strength of his rookie season. **Dusty Ziegler**, who hasn't taken a pro snap at the position, gets the first chance to replace Hull at center. **Jerry Ostroski** is vulnerable at right guard. **Glenn Parker**, who once played guard, may move back. If not, he'll have to fend off **Corey Louchiey** for right tackle.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	319.9	16
Passing	201.1	17
Rushing	118.8	8
Scoring	19.9	15
Punting	41.5	25
Punt Returns	9.8	14
Kick Returns	23.1	9
Total Defense	296.1	9
Against Pass	191.8	8
Against Run	104.3	14
Points Allowed	16.6	6
Interceptions	14	T21
Sacks	48	T3

The Defense Rests

Defense now carries this team, but the offensive collapse wore down the defenders in December. They were on the field for more plays than any defensive unit in the NFL. The demise of the Bills' no-huddle, hurry-up offense was good news to them. They lust for ball control, which gives them a breather.

The Bills were third in the NFL with 48 sacks. Right end **Bruce Smith** is 34, but he was the best defensive player in the league last year. He played the run fiercely and led the AFC with 13.5 sacks and the NFL with 45 quarterback knockdowns. Left end **Phil Hansen** is underrated. He makes big plays, eight of them

Todd Collins (at left) hopes to win the quarterback job in Buffalo.



Linebacker **Bryce Paup** (at top, above) and end **Bruce Smith** (bottom) are big-play performers.



the key stats

Jim Kelly completed 60 percent of his passes for 35,467 yards and 237 touchdowns in 11 seasons with Buffalo. **Chris Mohr** had the longest punt of the season (80 yards vs. Miami). The Bills had the AFC's stingiest defense in the red zone, yielding the fewest touchdowns (17) and the lowest TD percentage (37.0).



Jeff Burris (above), showing an acrobatic move against Seattle, started 15 games at cornerback last season for the Bills.

sacks in '96. The Bills thought nose tackle Ted Washington should have been in the Pro Bowl.

On the Outside Looking In

There are two great linebackers: **Bryce Paup** on the left outside and **Chris Spielman** alongside him on the inside. Paup had a groin injury, which handicapped him greatly for the last two-thirds of the season. **Sam Rogers** played well at right outside linebacker, but he'll be challenged by **Gabe Northern**, a big pass rusher, who is coming on like a freight train. If **John Holecsek** is finally through with his knee miseries, he could be another Spielman at right inside backer.

The secondary should get better if strong safety **Henry Jones** recovers fully after breaking a leg in the victory over Indianapolis. Right cornerback **Thomas Smith** is a budding star, with **Kurt Schulz** (four interceptions) playing solidly at free safety and **Jeff Burris** at left corner. The defense had the stingiest record in the AFC inside their own 20, allowing just 17 touchdowns, nine fewer than the conference average.

Extra Special

Buffalo also had the best special teams in the NFL, especially on coverage, where they allowed just 6.2 yards a punt return and 19.3 yards per kickoff return. Among **Chris Mohr's** 105 punts were 27 inside the 20. **Steve Christie** kicked 24 of 29 field goals and led the Bills in scoring (105 points).

BUFFALO BILLS

Marv Levy, Head Coach

Elijah Pitts, Assistant Head Coach/Running Backs; **Dan Henning**, Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks; **Wade Phillips**, Defensive Coordinator; **Tom Bresnahan**, Offensive Line; **Ted Cottrell**, Linebackers; **Bruce DeHaven**, Special Teams; **Charlie Joiner**, Wide Receivers; **Rusty Jones**, Strength and Conditioning; **Don Lawrence**, Offensive Quality Control/Tight Ends; **Chuck Lester**, Administrative Assistant to Head Coach/Linebackers; **Dick Roach**, Defensive Backs; **Dan Sekanovich**, Defensive Line

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
9	Ballard, Jim	QB	6-3	223	4/16/72	3	Mount Union
15	Collins, Todd	QB	6-4	224	11/5/71	2	Michigan
9	Hobert, Billy Joe	QB	6-3	230	1/8/71	2	Washington
10	Van Pelt, Alex	QB	6-1	219	5/1/70	2	Pittsburgh
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
76	Albright, Ethan	T	6-5	283	5/1/71	2	North Carolina
79	Brown, Ruben	G	6-3	304	2/13/72	2	Pittsburgh
70	Fina, John	T	6-4	285	3/11/69	5	Arizona
67	Hull, Kent	C	6-5	284	1/13/61	11	Mississippi State
60	Ostroski, Jerry	G	6-4	310	7/12/70	3	Tulsa
74	Parker, Glenn	T	6-5	305	4/22/66	7	Arizona
73	Rockwood, Mike	T	6-10	345	6/5/73	1	Nevada
61	Zeigler, Dusty	G	6-5	298	9/27/73	1	Notre Dame
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
45	Bender, Carey	RB	5-8	185	1/28/72	1	Coe College
29	Bratton, Jason	RB	6-1	252	10/19/72	1	Grambling
44	Holmes, Darick	RB	6-1	226	7/1/71	2	Portland State
34	Thomas, Thurman	RB	5-10	198	5/16/66	9	Oklahoma State
33	Tindale, Tim	RB	5-11	220	4/15/71	2	Western Ontario
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
81	Armour, Justin	WR	6-4	209	1/1/73	2	Stanford
82	Brantley, Chris	WR	5-10	180	12/12/70	3	Rutgers
86	Cline, Tony	TE	6-4	247	11/24/71	2	Stanford
88	Early, Quinn	WR	6-1	190	4/13/65	9	Iowa
80	Moulds, Eric	WR	6-1	204	7/17/73	1	Mississippi State
83	Reed, Andre	WR	6-2	190	1/29/64	12	Kutztown
49	Riemersma, Jay	TE	6-5	254	5/17/73	1	Michigan
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
97	Hammonds, Juan	DE	6-3	260	3/5/72	2	Michigan State
90	Hansen, Phil	DE	6-5	278	5/20/68	6	North Dakota State
77	Jeffcoat, Jim	DT	6-5	280	4/1/61	14	Arizona State
98	Moran, Sean	DE	6-3	255	6/5/73	1	Colorado State
99	Northern, Gabe	DE	6-3	240	6/8/74	1	Louisiana State
94	Pike, Mark	DE	6-4	272	12/27/63	10	Georgia Tech
91	Price, Shawn	DE	6-5	260	3/28/70	4	Pacific
78	Smith, Bruce	DE	6-4	273	6/18/63	12	Virginia Tech
92	Washington, Ted	DT	6-4	325	4/13/68	6	Louisville
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
22	Burris, Jeff	CB	6-1	204	6/7/72	3	Notre Dame
25	Collins, Mark	CB	5-10	196	1/16/64	11	Cal State-Fullerton
27	Irvin, Ken	CB	5-10	182	7/11/72	2	Memphis
31	Jackson, Ray	CB	5-10	189	2/17/73	1	Colorado State
20	Jones, Henry	S	5-11	198	12/29/67	6	Illinois
46	Kerner, Marlon	CB	5-10	187	3/18/73	2	Ohio State
21	Martin, Emanuel	CB	5-11	184	7/31/69	4	Alabama State
24	Schulz, Kurt	S	6-1	208	12/12/68	5	Eastern Washington
40	Smedley, Eric	S	5-11	199	7/23/73	1	Indiana
28	Smith, Thomas	CB	5-11	188	12/5/70	4	North Carolina
23	Stevens, Matt	CB	6-1	206	6/15/73	1	Appalachian State
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
96	Brandenburg, Dan	LB	6-2	255	2/2/73	1	Indiana State
57	Covington, Damien	LB	5-11	236	12/4/72	2	North Carolina State
52	Holecsek, John	LB	6-2	238	5/7/72	2	Illinois
55	Maddox, Mark	LB	6-1	233	3/23/68	5	Northern Michigan
95	Paup, Bryce	LB	6-5	247	2/29/68	7	Northern Iowa
54	Spielman, Chris	LB	6-1	247	10/11/65	9	Ohio State
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	Christie, Steve	K	6-1	185	11/13/67	7	William & Mary
6	Huerta, Carlos	K	5-7	185	6/29/69	1	Miami (FL)
9	Mohr, Chris	P	6-5	215	5/11/66	8	Alabama
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
87	Coons, Rob	TE	6-5	249	9/18/69	2	Pittsburgh
85	Copeland, Russell*	WR	6-0	200	11/4/71	4	Memphis State
84	Johnson, Lonnie	TE	6-3	240	2/14/71	3	Florida State
68	Lacina, Corbin	G	6-4	297	11/2/70	4	Augustana
72	Louchiey, Corey	T	6-8	305	10/10/71	3	South Carolina
58	Perry, Marlo	LB	6-4	250	8/25/72	3	Jackson State
59	Rogers, Sam	LB	6-3	245	5/30/70	3	Colorado
89	Tasker, Steve*	WR	5-9	183	4/10/62	12	Northwestern
51	White, David	LB	6-2	235	2/27/70	3	Nebraska

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	23	Antowain Smith	RB	6-2	224	Houston
2	52	Marcellus Wiley	DE	6-5	271	Columbia
4	120	Jamie Nails	T	6-6	354	Florida A&M
5	153	Sean Woodson	S	6-0	214	Jackson State
6	185	Marcus Spriggs	T	6-3	295	Houston
7	226	Pat Fitzgerald	TE	6-2	228	Texas

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS



Somehow the Colts always find enough to carry them further than anyone expects.

The Colts need a healthy Marshall Faulk (below).



Injuries took a toll on the Colts' Jim Harbaugh (below).

Indianapolis refuses to go down. The Colts seem to withstand more blows than any other team, and yet they always have enough left at the bell to carry them further than anyone expected. But this time they are in danger of suffering a knockout.

Last year, the Colts survived the loss of coach Ted Marchibroda, who led them into the 1995 AFC title game. They lost their best offensive lineman, Will Wolford, and an emerging cornerback, Ashley Ambrose, to free agency. They saw their leader, quarterback **Jim Harbaugh**, go down during the stretch run, and still they made the playoffs.

The Will to Win

Somehow the Colts find a way. They won with two free-agent linebackers, **Sammie Burroughs** and **Steve Morrison**. They won a December game against Buffalo with World League refugee **Paul Justin**. They won another game in December over Philadelphia after Justin got hurt and **Kerwin Bell**, making his NFL debut after being drafted in 1988, played quarterback.

Finishing Kick

The Colts' never-say-die attitude may not be able to overcome the team's woes this season, though. The evidence surfaced in the second half of the playoff game against Pittsburgh, when the Steelers exploded for 28 unanswered points.

Then there was the continuation of off-season

losses. Ray Buchanan, the big-play cornerback, signed with Atlanta. **Trev Alberts**, once seen as a potential Pro Bowl pass rusher, has had a depressing array of serious injuries. Valuable defensive tackle **Tony Siragusa** signed with Baltimore.

Hard Hits

More evidence can be found on Harbaugh's 34-year old body. Even with his penchant for escapability, Harbaugh suffered severe punishment when he was sacked 36 times: an elbow injury, a broken nose, ligament damage to his left knee, an eye injury, and a chipped tooth and 20-stitch gash in his mouth. He completed over 57 percent of his passes for 2,630 yards and 13 touchdowns, but his rating on third down (56.6) was almost 20 points below his overall rating.

Harbaugh didn't get much help. The Colts were next-to-last in the conference in rushing, averaging less than 100 yards per game. The running game needs the **Marshall Faulk** of 1994-95, not the Faulk of last season, when he averaged 3.0 yards per carry and gained just 587 yards due to injuries and the collapse of the line. **Lamont Warren** ran for 230 yards, and Harbaugh was third on the team, with 192. **Zack Crockett** also has to return to his early-season form, before he suffered a knee injury.

Putting It on the Line

Coach **Lindy Infante**'s biggest task is improving the offensive line. Its decline was the reason Harbaugh barely escaped with his skin and the running game went south. The only stable position is center, with veteran **Kirk Lowdermilk**. Left tackle is filled by **Jason Mathews** and **Kipp Vickers**. Retread **Tony Mandarich** is the right tackle. **Doug Widell** is the left guard, opposite **Jay Leeuwenburg**. **Eric Mahlum** may challenge at guard if his knee surgery was a success.

Things got so dicey on the unit late in the season that tight end **Ken Dilger**, normally a major part of the passing game, was held in to help with the blocking. He didn't have a catch for three consecutive games. The draft may have brought help in California tackle **Tarik Glenn** and Georgia tackle **Adam Meadows**.

The brightest news for the offense was the

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	296.5	25
Passing	206.0	16
Rushing	90.5	28
Scoring	19.8	T16
Punting	45.7	2
Punt Returns	10.9	10
Kick Returns	23.0	10
Total Defense	337.7	22
Against Pass	227.7	23
Against Run	110	18
Points Allowed	20.9	18
Interceptions	13	T23
Sacks	29	28



the key stats

The Colts surrendered a league-low eight first downs on penalties. They had the fewest penalties (76) and penalty yards (615) in the league. They were also the AFC's least efficient offense in the red zone (41.3 TD percentage). **Cary Blanchard** led the NFL in field goal percentage (.900), hitting 36 of 40, including all five from at least 50 yards.

development of **Marvin Harrison**, who led the Colts with 64 receptions, including eight for touchdowns, as a rookie. **Sean Dawkins** averaged 13.9 yards on his 54 catches.

On the Defensive

The defensive line, less than robust, got even thinner when Siragusa left. **Tony Bennett**, basically a pass rusher, is at right end, with **Bernard Whittington** at left end and **Tony McCoy** at



Indianapolis is encouraged by the development of young wide receivers Marvin Harrison (at left) and Sean Dawkins (above).

left tackle. **Ellis Johnson** and **Martin** need to develop quickly.

Injuries hit the linebacking corps the hardest. The leader, **Quentin Coryatt**, missed eight games due to a torn pectoral muscle that required surgery. **Steve Grant** suffered a knee injury and inside linebacker **Jeff Herrod**, who remained in the lineup, was handicapped by a number of injuries. Morrison came through as a sub in all three spots, but the Colts need a transfusion here. Maybe rookie **Bert Berry**, mainly a pass rusher at Notre Dame, is it.

Secondary Questions

Indianapolis signed Seattle cornerback **Carlton Gray** as a replacement for **Buchanan**. **Eugene Daniel** played well on the right corner, but he's 36 now. It's time for **Dedric Mathis** to step up. Free safety **Jason Belser** returned two of his four interceptions for touchdowns. Strong safety **David Tate** is a question mark because of the herniated disc which ended his season in November.

The Colts' kicking game is as solid as any in the league. Punter **Chris Gardocki** (45.7-yard average) and placekicker **Cary Blanchard** (36 of 40 field goals) went to the Pro Bowl. **Aaron Bailey** had a 95-yard kickoff return for a touchdown. With **Buchanan** gone, **Harrison** will reclaim the punt returns.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Lindy Infante, Head Coach

Jim Johnson, Defensive Coordinator; Wayne Geis, Offensive Assistant/Assistant Quarterbacks; Fred Bruney, Defensive Assistant; Tom Batta, Tight Ends/Quality Control; Greg Blache, Defensive Line; Ron Blackledge, Offensive Line; Chuck Bresnahan, Linebackers; Charlie Davis, Assistant to the Offensive Line; Gene Huey, Running Backs; Hank Kuhlmann, Special Teams; Jim Robinson, Wide Receivers; Pat Thomas, Secondary; Tom Zupancic, Strength and Conditioning

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Bell, Kerwin	QB	6-2	200	6/15/65	9 Florida
4	Harbaugh, Jim	QB	6-3	215	12/23/63	10 Michigan
13	Holcomb, Kelly	QB	6-2	219	7/9/73	1 Middle Tennessee State
11	Justin, Paul	QB	6-4	211	05/19/68	2 Arizona State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
75	Auzenne, Troy	T	6-7	300	6/26/69	5 California
66	Hardin, Steve	G	6-7	334	12/30/71	1 Oregon
58	Leeuwenburg, Jay	G	6-3	297	6/18/69	5 Colorado
65	Mahlum, Eric	G	6-4	289	12/6/70	3 California
79	Mandarich, Tony	T	6-5	317	9/23/66	8 Michigan State
67	Mathews, Jason	T	6-5	290	2/9/71	3 Texas A&M
71	Vickers, Kipp	T	6-2	297	8/27/69	2 Miami (FL)
72	West, Derek	T	6-8	312	3/28/72	2 Colorado
64	Widell, Doug	G	6-4	291	9/23/66	8 Boston College

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
32	Crockett, Zack	RB	6-2	246	12/2/72	2 Florida State
28	Faulk, Marshall	RB	5-10	211	2/26/73	3 San Diego State
33	Groce, Cliff	RB	5-11	245	7/30/72	2 Texas A&M
44	Hetherington, Chris	RB	6-2	233	11/27/72	1 Yale
27	Mickens, Arnold	RB	5-11	217	10/12/72	1 Butler
20	Neal, Leon	RB	5-9	185	9/11/72	1 Washington
21	Warren, Lamont	RB	5-11	211	1/4/73	3 Colorado

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
87	Dawkins, Sean	WR	6-4	211	2/3/71	4 California
85	Dilger, Ken	TE	6-5	259	2/2/71	2 Illinois
15	Doering, Chris	WR	6-4	191	05/19/73	1 Florida
88	Harrison, Marvin	WR	6-1	181	8/25/72	1 Syracuse
81	Pollard, Marcus	TE	6-4	257	2/8/72	2 Bradley
84	Slutzker, Scott	TE	6-4	254	12/20/72	1 Iowa
15	Smith, Terry	WR	6-1	206	4/20/71	2 Clemson
10	Stock, Mark	WR	6-1	180	4/27/66	8 VMI

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
96	Fontenot, Al	DE	6-4	277	9/17/70	4 Baylor
62	Johnson, Ellis	DT	6-2	292	10/30/73	2 Florida
90	Martin, Steve	DT	6-4	292	5/31/74	1 Missouri
61	McCoy, Tony	DT	6-1	282	6/10/69	5 Florida
93	Nunn, Freddie Joe	DE	6-5	262	4/9/62	12 Mississippi
97	Shello, Kendel	DT	6-3	301	11/24/73	1 Southern
94	Wilkins, David	DE	6-4	240	2/24/69	5 Eastern Kentucky

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
29	Belser, Jason	S	5-9	188	5/28/70	5 Oklahoma
26	Gray, Carlton	CB	6-1	200	6/26/71	4 UCLA
30	Gray, Derwin	S	5-11	210	4/9/71	4 Brigham Young
35	Hall, Steven	S	6-1	209	4/15/73	1 Kentucky
39	Jones, Richard	S	5-9	174	8/4/73	1 Texas A&M-Kingsville
26	Mathis, Dedric	CB	5-10	196	9/26/73	1 Houston
40	McElroy, Ray	CB	5-11	207	7/31/72	2 Eastern Illinois
49	Tate, David	S	6-1	209	11/22/64	9 Colorado

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
51	Alberts, Trev	LB	6-4	245	8/8/70	3 Nebraska
50	Alexander, Elijah	LB	6-2	230	8/8/70	5 Kansas State
56	Bennett, Tony	LB	6-2	250	7/1/67	7 Mississippi
53	Burroughs, Sammie	LB	6-1	215	6/21/73	1 Portland State
55	Coryatt, Quentin	LB	6-3	250	8/1/70	5 Texas A&M
59	Grant, Stephen	LB	6-1	240	12/23/69	5 West Virginia
54	Herrod, Jeff	LB	6-1	249	7/29/66	9 Mississippi
52	Morrison, Steve	LB	6-3	243	12/28/71	2 Michigan

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
14	Blanchard, Cary	K	6-1	227	11/5/68	5 Oklahoma State
17	Gardocki, Chris	P	6-1	200	2/7/70	6 Clemson

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Bailey, Aaron	WR	5-10	183	10/24/71	3	Louisville
83	Banta, Brad	TE	6-6	260	12/14/70	3	Southern California
38	Daniel, Eugene	CB	5-11	178	5/4/61	13	Louisiana State
96	Dent, Richard*	DE	6-5	265	12/13/60	12	Tennessee State
63	Lowdermilk, Kirk	C	6-4	284	4/10/63	12	Ohio State
86	Stablein, Brian	WR	6-1	193	4/14/70	3	Ohio State
36	Watts, Damon	CB	5-10	175	4/8/72	3	Indiana
95	Whittington, Bernard	DE	6-6	283	8/20/71	3	Indiana
46	Workman, Vince*	RB	5-10	215	5/9/68	8	Ohio State
57	Yeboah-Kodie, Phil*	LB	6-2	230	1/22/71	1	Penn State

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

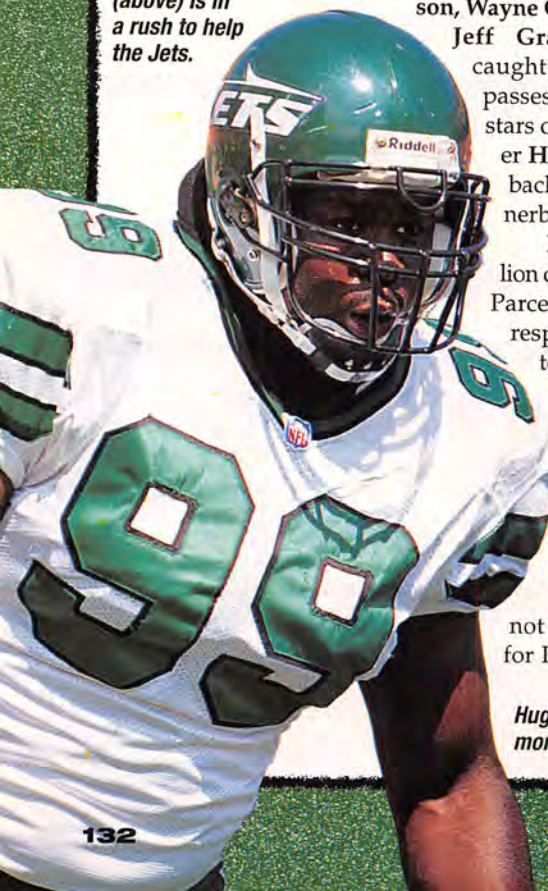
RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	19	Tarik Glenn	T	6-5	335	California
2	48	Adam Meadows	T	6-5	292	Georgia
3	86	Bert Berry	LB	6-2	248	Notre Dame
4	117	Delmonico Montgomery	DB	5-11	185	Houston
5	150	Nathaniel Jacquet	WR	6-0	173	San Diego State
5	156	Carl Powell	DE	6-3	265	Louisville
6	182	Scott Van der Ahe	LB	5-11	242	Arizona State
7	219	Clarence Thompson	DB	6-1	192	Knoxville



There won't be any miracles for Parcells, but the Jets are ready for something new: winning.



Adrian Murrell (above) is in a rush to help the Jets.



It's the Year of the Tuna in New York. With new coach **Bill Parcells** hoping to disprove the notion that you can't go home again, the Jets should win five or six games on better coaching and organization alone. There's enough talent on hand for a drastic improvement. The major difference should be in the players' commitment to the way Parcells does things. That could be sensed from his first meeting with the players. The Jets have been grounded for a long time, but they are ready for something new: winning.

There should not be any more pulled muscles suffered in pregame warmups. No more volunteer coaching from the players. There won't be any instant miracles on the field, either, but opponents will take the Jets seriously every Sunday.

Skill Players

Parcells inherited some skill players upon whom he can begin to rebuild. **Adrian Murrell** blossomed as a ball carrier last season, his fourth in the NFL, gaining 1,249 yards without a lot of support. Three receivers—**Keyshawn Johnson**, **Wayne Chrebet**, and **Jeff Graham**—each caught at least 50

passes. There are three potential stars on the defense in pass rusher **Hugh Douglas**, middle linebacker **Marvin Jones**, and cornerback **Aaron Glenn**.

Neil O'Donnell's \$25 million contract is still a mistake, but Parcells and the Jets could be respectable with him at quarterback. The trick is to try to keep O'Donnell healthy. He started only six games last year and was sacked once every 10 times he dropped back to pass.

At Last

So while the cupboard is not completely bare, the task for Parcells is enormous. That

Hugh Douglas (at left) needs more help rushing the passer.

1-15 record was well-earned. The Jets were last in the AFC in interceptions, last in sacks, last in kick-off returns, tied for next-to-last in field goals, and last in the league in punt returns, last in turnover differential, last in scoring, and, of course, last in the standings.

All that passing in New England during the last three years was not Parcells's offense. What he would rather see is his big linemen wearing down a defense until the opponent's will evaporates in the fourth quarter. Obviously, Parcells didn't agree with the conventional wisdom that **Orlando Pace** was the second coming of **Anthony Munoz**. Otherwise, he would have retained the top overall pick and taken him in the draft.

Instead, Parcells has former Giant **Jumbo Elliott** at left tackle with a chronically creaky back and **David Williams**, whose zest for the game is questioned, at right tackle. **Matt O'Dwyer** is due to produce at right guard. Left guard **Harry Galbreath** and center **Roger Duffy** have been around. They'll get a lot of work digging holes for Murrell and **Lorenzo Neal**, a power back—and power blocker—signed away from the New Orleans Saints.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	325.5	11
Passing	226.6	10
Rushing	98.9	23
Scoring	17.4	27
Punting	44.5	7
Punt Returns	5.0	30
Kick Returns	19.0	29
Total Defense	347.8	27
Against Pass	210.3	19
Against Run	137.5	29
Points Allowed	28.4	29
Interceptions	11	T27
Sacks	28	T29

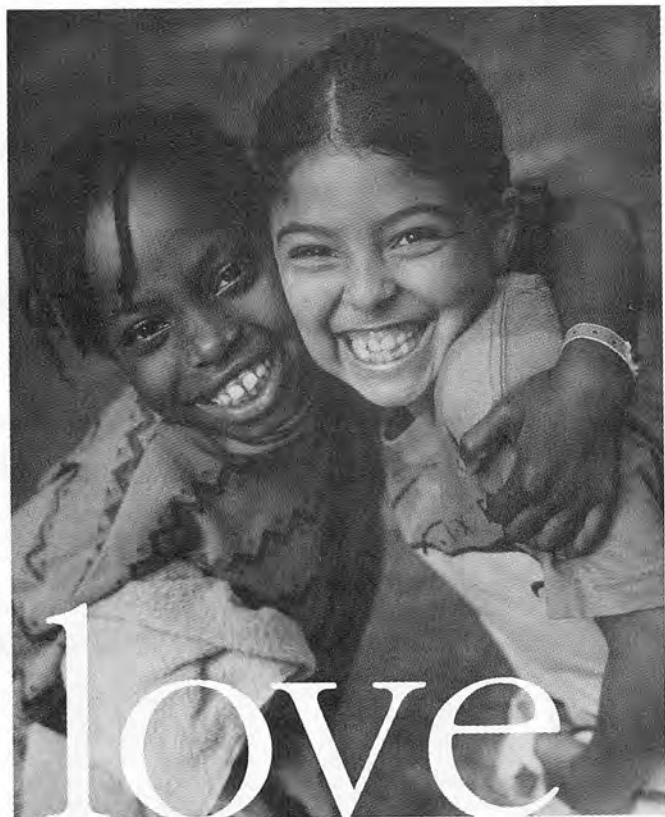
Catch of the Day

The most interesting development will be the expected tug of war between the new coach and Johnson, whose football philosophy ("Just give me the damn ball") runs directly counter to that of Parcells. Keyshawn had 63 receptions for 844 yards and eight touchdowns, but he went ballistic over the 84 catches by the overachiever Chrebet, a league-high 31 of which came on third down. Graham (50 catches and six touchdowns in 11 games), once O'Donnell's battery mate in Pittsburgh, may pass Johnson and Chrebet. The major project is to make a Ben Coates out of **Kyle Brady**, the club's top pick in 1995 but a disappointment (15 catches and one touchdown) so far at tight end.

Parcells, out to show the football world he can run a productive draft, traded down and still acquired a top linebacker: big, smart **James Farrior** of Virginia. Of more immediate impact may be the huge defensive tackle from North Carolina, **Rick Terry**, taken with the second pick. The Jets need some muscle in the middle of their line.

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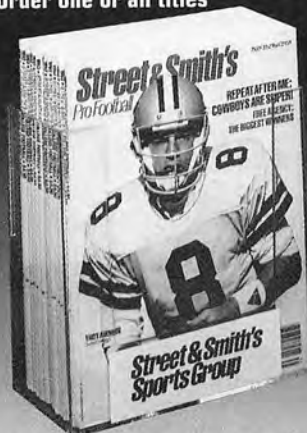
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the key stats

Wayne Chrebet has caught more passes (150) in his first two seasons than any player in NFL history. **Keyshawn Johnson** was third among rookie receivers in catches (63) and second in touchdowns (eight). **Victor Green** set a single-season team record with 207 tackles (125 solo). The Jets were last in the league in turnover differential (-20).

Lack of Pressure

Right end Douglas had eight of New York's paltry 28 sacks. Terry will line up alongside **Marc Spindler** at tackle, with **Marvin Washington** and Douglas on the outside. Parcells signed one of his ex-Giants, **Pepper Johnson**, to play middle linebacker, but he is unimpressed with the underachieving **Marvin Jones**, who will be challenged by Farrior on the strong side. **Mo Lewis** is the weakside linebacker.

With little pressure on the quarterback, the Jets' secondary picked off just 11 passes. Four of them were by Glenn, who returned two of them for touchdowns, including one for 100 yards against Miami. If Glenn and **Ray Mickens** start, Parcells will be stuck with relatively small cornerbacks, something he hates. That's why he signed **Jerome Henderson**, who played for him in New England. **Marcus Coleman** wrested the job from Mickens late last season. **Victor Green** is the strong safety and **Gary Jones** plays free safety.

Nothing Special

Parcells performed his first cut on veteran Nick Lowery, the lowest-scoring placekicker in the AFC (77 points), who converted just two of eight field-goal attempts between 40 and 49 yards. Of course, part of the problem was an offense that positioned him for just 24 attempts overall. In line for the job opening is kickoff specialist **Don Silvestri**. Punter **Brian Hansen's** 44.7-yard average was his career best. Rookie wide receiver **Dedrick Ward** could help the return game. He returned two punts for touchdowns at Northern Iowa.

Keyshawn Johnson (at right, below) caught 63 passes in his rookie year and **Wayne Chrebet** (at left) caught 84 in his second season.



NEW YORK JETS

Bill Parcells, Head Coach

Bill Belichick, Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Backs; Ron Erhardt, Quarterbacks/Special Assistant Coach; Maurice Carthon, Running Backs; Romeo Crennel, Defensive Line; Al Groh, Linebackers; Pat Hodgson, Tight Ends; John Lott, Strength and Conditioning; Eric Mangini, Defensive Assistant/Quality Control; Bill Muir, Offensive Line; Mike Sweatman, Special Teams; Charlie Weis, Wide Receivers

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Foley, Glenn	QB	6-2	210	10/10/70	3	Boston College
14	O'Donnell, Neil	QB	6-3	228	7/3/66	6	Maryland
10	Paci, John	QB	6-3	218	07/19/72	1	Indiana
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
62	Duffy, Roger	G	6-3	305	7/16/67	7	Penn State
76	Elliott, Jumbo	T	6-7	308	4/1/65	9	Michigan
68	Fiore, Dave	T	6-4	275	8/10/74	1	Hofstra
64	Galbreath, Harry	G	6-1	285	1/1/65	9	Tennessee
65	Hudson, John	G	6-2	276	1/29/68	6	Auburn
75	Malamala, Siupeli	T	6-5	305	1/15/69	5	Washington
70	O'Dwyer, Matt	G	6-5	294	9/1/72	2	Northwestern
68	Palelei, Lonnie	G	6-3	315	10/15/70	4	UNLV
60	Wiegmann, Casey	T	6-3	290	7/20/73	1	Iowa
73	Williams, David	T	6-5	300	6/21/66	8	Florida
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
20	Anderson, Richie	RB	6-2	225	9/13/71	4	Penn State
28	Cobb, Reggie	RB	6-1	212	7/7/68	7	Tennessee
27	D'Agostino, Lou	RB	6-1	235	12/12/73	1	Rhode Island
29	Murrell, Adrian	RB	5-11	214	10/16/70	4	West Virginia
22	Neal, Lorenzo	RB	5-11	240	12/27/70	4	Fresno State
34	Rasheed, Kenyon	RB	5-10	235	8/23/70	4	Oklahoma
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
84	Baxter, Fred	TE	6-3	260	6/14/71	4	Auburn
88	Brady, Kyle	TE	6-6	260	1/14/72	2	Penn State
80	Chrebet, Wayne	WR	5-10	185	8/14/73	2	Hofstra
83	Davis, Tyrone	TE	6-4	255	6/30/72	2	Virginia
81	Graham, Jeff	WR	6-2	200	2/14/69	6	Ohio State
19	Johnson, Keyshawn	WR	6-3	215	7/22/72	1	Southern California
86	Van Dyke, Alex	WR	6-1	200	7/24/74	1	Nevada
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
90	Dixon, Ronnie	DT	6-3	310	5/10/71	4	Cincinnati
99	Douglas, Hugh	DE	6-2	270	8/23/71	2	Central State
92	Hamilton, Bobby	DE	6-5	280	1/7/71	1	Southern Mississippi
93	Logan, Ernie	DE	6-3	288	5/18/68	6	East Carolina
95	Lyle, Rick	DE	6-5	280	2/26/71	3	Missouri
97	Washington, Marvin	DE	6-6	280	10/22/65	8	Idaho
90	White, Reggie	NT	6-5	303	3/22/70	5	North Carolina A&T
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
26	Brown, Lance	CB	6-1	200	2/2/72	2	Indiana
42	Coleman, Marcus	S	6-2	205	5/24/74	1	Texas Tech
31	Glenn, Aaron	CB	5-9	185	7/16/72	3	Texas A&M
21	Green, Victor	CB	5-9	205	12/8/69	4	Akron
22	Greenwood, Carl	CB	5-11	186	3/11/72	2	UCLA
26	Henderson, Jerome	CB	5-10	188	8/8/69	6	Clemson
25	Jones, Gary	S	6-1	217	11/30/67	7	Texas A&M
24	Mickens, Ray	CB	5-8	180	1/4/73	1	Texas A&M
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
53	Cascadden, Chad	LB	6-1	235	5/14/72	2	Wisconsin
55	Houston, Bobby	LB	6-2	245	10/26/67	7	North Carolina State
99	Johnson, Pepper	LB	6-3	248	7/29/64	11	Ohio State
54	Jones, Marvin	LB	6-2	250	6/28/72	4	Florida State
57	Lewis, Mo	LB	6-3	255	10/21/69	6	Georgia
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Hansen, Brian	P	6-4	215	10/26/60	13	Sioux Falls
5	Silvestri, Don	K	6-4	220	12/25/68	2	Pittsburgh
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
72	Alexander, David*	C	6-3	285	7/28/64	11	Tulsa
85	Bailey, Henry*	WR	5-9	183	2/28/73	1	UNLV
58	Beavers, Aubrey*	LB	6-3	234	8/30/71	3	Oklahoma
78	Benfatti, Lou*	DT	6-4	285	3/9/71	3	Penn State
94	Brock, Matt*	DT	6-5	300	1/14/66	8	Oregon
71	Chalenski, Mike*	DT	6-5	290	1/28/70	4	UCLA
98	Gunn, Mark*	DE	6-5	279	7/24/68	4	Pittsburgh
51	Mason, Eddie*	LB	6-0	245	1/9/72	2	North Carolina
87	Slaughter, Webster*	WR	6-1	175	10/19/64	11	San Diego State
23	Zomalt, Eric*	S	5-11	201	8/9/72	3	California

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	8	James Farrior	LB	6-2	240	Virginia
2	31	Rick Terry	DT	6-4	309	North Carolina
3	88	Dedrick Ward	WR	5-9	180	Northern Iowa
4	102	Terry Day	DE	6-4	280	Mississippi State
4	104	Leon Johnson	RB	6-0	209	North Carolina
5	131	Lamont Burns	G	6-4	300	East Carolina
5	145	Raymond Austin	DB	5-11	190	Tennessee
6	164	Tim Scharf	LB	6-1	244	Northwestern
6	191	Chuck Clements	QB	6-3	214	Houston
7	202	Steve Rosga	S	6-1	215	Colorado
7	229	Jason Ferguson	DT	6-3	305	Georgia

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The surprising Jaguars won't be content with anything less than the Super Bowl this year.

by Larry Felser *Buffalo News*

Predicted order of finish



In the final regular-season game, Atlanta's Morten Andersen missed a gimme field goal that allowed Jacksonville to back into the playoffs. At the time, it didn't seem like that big a break. But the Jaguars then took full advantage of the opportunity, riding a crest of confidence that took them past Buffalo and Denver and all the way to the AFC title game.

Jacksonville Jaguars

Jacksonville won't be content with short-term success. Unlike their expansion brethren Carolina Panthers, who went the older, free-agent route, the young Jaguars were built for the long run. The man who can lead them there is quarterback Mark Brunell, a younger version of Steve Young. Brunell is the quarterback for the '90s. He has a strong arm, legs that pick up unexpected first downs, and a supporting cast that seems tailored to his skills.

Pittsburgh Steelers*

Pittsburgh enters the season as it began last year, with an unsolved mystery at quarterback. Kordell Stewart appears to have the job, but with more hope than confidence. He doesn't have to be sensational, just sound enough to supplement a running game that features Jerome Bettis.

The Steeler defense was ravaged by free-agent losses and the defection of coordinator Dick LeBeau to Cincinnati. Jim Haslett, one of the NFL's bright young comers, moves over from New Orleans to replace him. The Steelers need the healthy return of linebacker Greg Lloyd to make up for some of the departures.

Cincinnati Bengals*

The Bengals have been flying since Bruce Coslet became head coach halfway through last season. They won their last three games to finish 7-2 under him (8-8 overall), but their optimism is tempered by the defection of running back Garrison Hearst (847 yards) to San Francisco.

The Bengals could offset Hearst's departure if they can catch on quickly to defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau's new 3-4 set with zone-blitzing, which was so successful for Carolina and Pittsburgh a year ago.

Houston Oilers

Coach Jeff Fisher has carefully nurtured quarterback Steve McNair for two years, and the young phenom now appears strong enough to stand on

his own. He'll have some support, though. Running back Eddie George gained 1,368 yards and was the league's Rookie of the Year. The Oilers also did the smart thing and spent the money to re-sign left tackle Brad Hopkins to protect McNair.

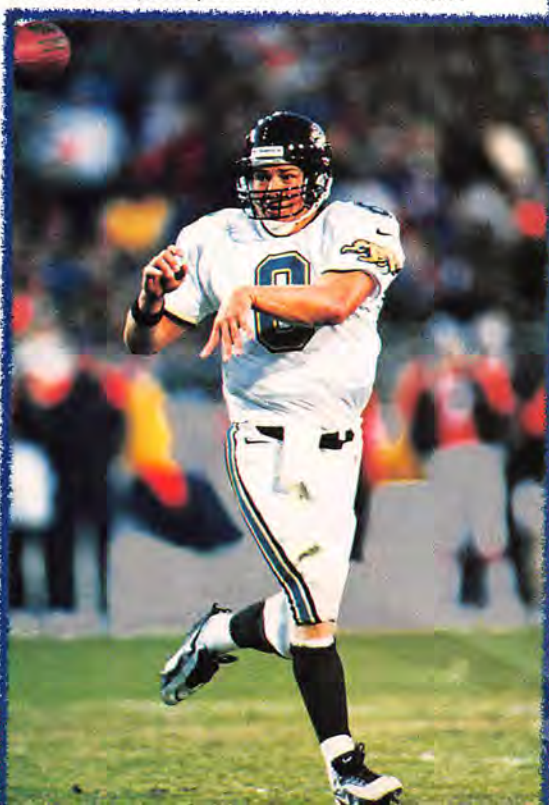
The Oilers will finish out their lame-duck sentence, playing before crowds of 20,000 in the Astrodome, before they make their exit for Nashville in 1998. They didn't win a game at home last season after October 20, but they did win three times on the road.

Baltimore Ravens

Whether it's in Baltimore or Cleveland, owner Art Modell still doesn't know how to operate in today's NFL. Vinny Testaverde had a career season for the Ravens (33 touchdown passes and 4,177 yards). So what does Modell do? He loses center Steve Everitt, fullback Carwell Gardner, and left tackle Tony Jones. On the bright side, the Ravens emerged as one of the biggest winners in the draft, improving their defense with pass rusher Peter Boulware and linebacker Jamie Sharper.

Last season ended with defeats in seven of the final eight games. The prospects for 1997 aren't much better. Yes, the NFL returned to Baltimore, but only in a manner of speaking.

Mark Brunell (below) is at home in Jacksonville.



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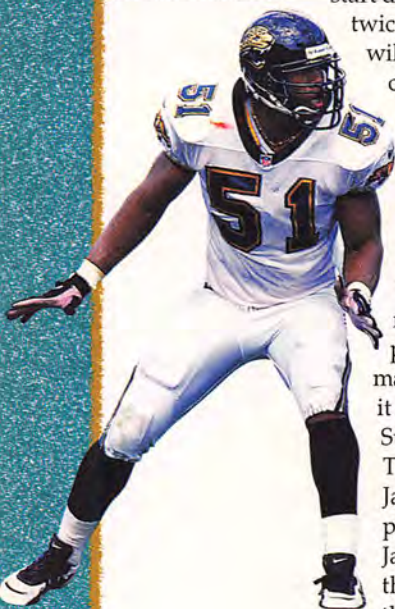
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JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS



It wasn't a coincidence that when the Jaguars took off, so, too, did their running game.

Jacksonville linebacker Kevin Hardy (below) made an impact his rookie season.



All right, maybe the Jaguars did over-achieve in their second year of existence. Going into the last weekend in November, they were 4-7. But the future arrived much sooner than anyone, including perhaps even coach **Tom Coughlin**, expected in Jacksonville. The Jaguars did it the hard way, overcoming a sluggish start during the regular season, and then rallying twice in the playoffs: first against Buffalo in the wild-card round and then against AFC West champion Denver in the second round. "Now the bar has been raised," says center **Dave Widell**.

The same bar had been raised to Coughlin's throat before the Jaguars went on their late sprint. It's hard to believe now, but there were rumblings that the man who put together this expansion marvel, and eventually steered it to within a game of the Super Bowl, would be fired. The months of December and January changed the entire picture in Jacksonville. The Jaguars won seven in a row, their last five games during the regular season and their first two playoff games.

But the by-product of success in the NFL is that your rivals hire away your help. Kevin Gilbride, the offensive coordinator and the man responsible for the Jags' late explosion, is now the head coach of the San Diego Chargers. Replacing him is Chris Palmer, from the New England Patriots.

Split Personality

It wasn't a coincidence that when the Jaguars took off, so, too, did their robust running back, ex-Charger **Natrone Means**. He gained 507 yards last

season, including 364 in the last five regular-season games, then added 315 in the playoff victories against Buffalo and Denver. **James Stewart** is also a power back. He led the team with 723 yards and eight touchdowns.

Earlier in the season, Jacksonville ran basically a passing offense. This season, the offense should be more balanced. **Mark Brunell** emerged in the playoffs as one of the NFL's better young quarterbacks. He played every down, finishing with a league-leading 4,367 passing yards and 19 touchdowns. Most of his 20 interceptions came during the first half of the season. He was also the league's leading rusher at his position, gaining 396 yards.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	360.0	2
Passing	256.9	1
Rushing	103.1	17
Scoring	20.3	14
Punting	43.7	T9
Punt Returns	10.3	12
Kick Returns	21.8	16
Total Defense	317.8	15
Against Pass	206.5	16
Against Run	111.3	19
Points Allowed	20.9	19
Interceptions	13	T23
Sacks	37	T10

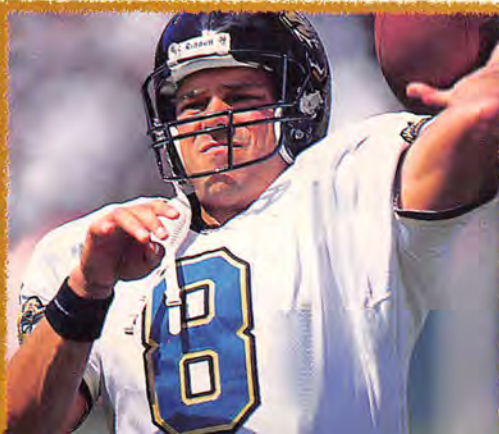
Money Receivers

Keenan McCardell caught 85 passes and went to the Pro Bowl. Fellow wide receiver, **Jimmy Smith**, who caught just two fewer passes and has a more physical presence, could emerge as the go-to guy this year. Smith was fifth in the league with 1,244 receiving yards, averaging 15.0 per catch. Furthermore, 25 of his receptions produced first downs. **Derek Brown** is the blocking tight end.

Power Line

The heart of the offense is the line, which can open huge holes for Means and Stewart and give Brunell the time to pass. Left tackle **Tony Boselli** has matured into an updated version of Anthony Munoz. In the surprise wild-card victory at Buffalo, he made Bruce Smith vanish. Right tackle **Leon Searcy**, the expensive ex-Steeler, struggled at first in his new environment, but thrived down the stretch. Unheralded right guard **Rich Tylski** kept **Brian DeMarco** on the bench after DeMarco came

The Jaguars rely on Jimmy Smith, Mark Brunell, and Keenan McCardell (below, left to right) for offense.



the key stats

Mark Brunell was the only NFL quarterback to take all of his team's snaps last fall. Placekicker **Mike Hollis** led the team in scoring (117 points). Wide receiver **Keenan McCardell** was the first Jacksonville player voted to the Pro Bowl. The Jaguars were the only team to win a playoff game on the road last year.



The Jags' Kevin Hardy, Dana Hall, and Tom McManus (left to right).

off the injured list. Ben Coleman is the left guard. Widell may be challenged by Michael Cheever.

Giving Back

Even though the Jaguars stunned Buffalo and Denver in the playoffs, their defense gave up 27 points in each game. Jacksonville's offense was second in the NFL and its passing offense was first, but the defense against the pass (No. 16) was only slightly better than the defense against the run (No. 19).

Defensive coordinator Dick Jauron could make as many as four changes in his starting lineup. The expectation is that the defense will tighten up, especially when a trio of sensational 1996 rookies—linebacker Kevin Hardy, end Tony Brackens, and cornerback Aaron Beasley—get more experience. Brackens should push either Jeff Lageman or Clyde Simmons, who led the club with 7.5 sacks, aside at end. Tackles John Jurkovic and Don Davey get needed help with the arrival of No. 1 draftee Renaldo Wynn of Notre Dame.

Set at Linebacker

The Jaguars may be set at linebacker for years with Hardy and Eddie Robinson on the outside and Bryan Schwartz in the middle, although Schwartz missed the last 12 games and the playoffs when he suffered torn knee ligaments. Tom McManus filled in capably in his place. Rookie James Hamilton of North Carolina adds depth to the unit.

Ex-Steeler Deon Figures is the left corner. Aaron Thomas is the right corner, with Chris Hudson at free safety and Dana Hall on the strong side. Rookie Mike Logan of West Virginia could see time as the extra back and as a kick returner.

Mike Hollis connected on 30 of 36 field goals and scored 117 points, but the punting job is open. Hudson was No. 10 in the NFL in punt returns, averaging 10.9.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

Tom Coughlin, Head Coach

Chris Palmer, Offensive Coordinator; Dick Jauron, Defensive Coordinator; Pete Carmichael, Wide Receivers; Jerald Ingram, Running Backs; Mike Maser, Offensive Line; John Pease, Defensive Line; Larry Pasquale, Special Teams; Randy Edsall, Secondary; Fred Hoaglin, Tight Ends; Jerry Palmieri, Strength and Conditioning; Lucious Selmon, Outside Linebackers; Steve Szabo, Inside Linebackers; Joe Baker, Assistant Special Teams; Jeff Hurd, Assistant Strength and Conditioning

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
8	Brunell, Mark	QB	6-1	217	9/17/70	3 Washington
11	Johnson, Rob	QB	6-4	214	3/18/73	2 Southern California
5	Philcox, Todd	QB	6-4	223	9/25/66	7 Syracuse

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
71	Boselli, Tony	T	6-7	323	4/17/72	2 Southern California
63	Cheever, Michael	C	6-4	291	6/24/73	1 Georgia Tech
62	Coleman, Ben	G	6-5	325	5/18/71	4 Wake Forest
73	DeMarco, Brian	T	6-7	322	4/9/72	2 Michigan State
74	Herndon, Jimmy	T	6-8	311	8/30/73	1 Houston
67	Novak, Jeff	G	6-6	297	7/27/67	3 Southwest Texas State
75	Price, Marcus	T	6-6	318	3/3/72	2 Louisiana State
72	Searcy, Leon	T	6-4	313	12/21/69	5 Miami
76	Tylski, Rich	G	6-5	309	2/27/71	1 Utah State
79	Widell, Dave	C	6-7	318	5/14/65	9 Boston College

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
23	Jordan, Randy	RB	5-11	218	6/6/70	4 North Carolina
35	Maston, Le'Shai	RB	6-1	229	10/7/70	4 Baylor
20	Means, Natrone	RB	5-10	240	4/26/72	4 North Carolina
33	Stewart, James	RB	6-1	224	12/27/71	2 Tennessee

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
16	Askew, Chad	WR	6-4	200	1/27/72	2 Pittsburgh
84	Barlow, Reggie	WR	5-11	186	1/22/73	1 Alabama State
86	Brown, Derek	TE	6-6	269	3/31/70	5 Notre Dame
88	Bullard, Kendrick	WR	6-1	183	4/30/72	1 Arkansas State
81	Griffin, Chris	TE	6-4	257	7/26/74	1 New Mexico
85	Griffith, Rich	TE	6-5	255	7/31/69	4 Arizona
54	Hallock, Ty	TE	6-2	255	4/30/71	4 Michigan State
80	Jackson, Willie	WR	6-1	209	8/16/71	3 Florida
89	Marsh, Curtis	WR	6-2	206	11/24/70	2 Utah
87	McCardell, Keenan	WR	6-1	186	1/6/70	5 UNLV
83	Mitchell, Pete	TE	6-2	241	10/9/71	2 Boston College
83	Moore, Will	WR	6-2	180	2/21/70	2 Texas Southern
82	Smith, Jimmy	WR	6-1	201	2/9/69	5 Jackson State
84	Warren, Terrence	WR	6-2	208	8/2/69	4 Hampton

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
90	Brackens, Tony	DE	6-4	267	12/26/74	1 Texas
92	Davey, Don	DT	6-4	267	4/8/68	6 Wisconsin
77	Davis, Andre	DT	6-3	330	10/7/75	1 Southern
91	Frase, Paul	DT	6-5	273	5/5/65	9 Syracuse
64	Jurkovic, John	NT	6-2	295	8/18/67	6 Eastern Illinois
56	Lageman, Jeff	DE	6-6	268	7/18/67	8 Virginia
94	Pritchett, Kelvin	DT	6-3	296	10/24/69	6 Mississippi
96	Simmons, Clyde	DE	6-6	280	8/4/64	11 Western Carolina
99	Smeenge, Joel	DE	6-6	270	4/1/68	7 Western Michigan

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Beasley, Aaron	CB	6-1	195	7/7/73	1 West Virginia
42	Bell, Ricky	CB	5-10	186	10/2/74	1 North Carolina State
22	Brooks, Bucky	CB	6-1	195	1/22/71	3 North Carolina
45	Davis, Travis	S	6-1	200	1/10/73	2 Notre Dame
21	Figures, Deon	CB	6-1	192	1/20/70	4 Colorado
28	Hall, Dana	S	6-3	210	7/8/69	5 Washington
37	Hudson, Chris	S	5-10	198	10/6/71	2 Colorado
40	Massey, Robert	CB	5-11	198	2/17/67	8 North Carolina Central
30	Studstill, Darren	S	6-1	186	8/9/70	3 West Virginia
41	Thomas, Dave	CB	6-3	215	8/25/68	4 Tennessee

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
52	Boyer, Brant	LB	6-1	231	6/27/71	3 Arizona
51	Hardy, Kevin	LB	6-4	247	7/24/73	1 Illinois
57	Kopp, Jeff	LB	6-3	243	7/8/71	2 Southern California
55	McManus, Tom	LB	6-2	246	7/30/70	2 Boston College
50	Robinson, Eddie	LB	6-1	243	4/13/70	5 Alabama State
58	Schwartz, Bryan	LB	6-4	255	12/5/71	2 Augustana (SD)
95	White, Jose	LB	6-3	274	3/2/73	2 Howard

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Barker, Bryan	P	6-2	186	6/28/64	7 Santa Clara
1	Hollis, Mike	K	5-7	176	5/22/72	2 Idaho
2	O'Neill, Pat	P	6-1	200	2/9/71	3 Syracuse

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP	COLLEGE
54	Hallock, Ty	LB	6-3	256	4/30/71	3	Michigan State
66	Huntington, Greg	G	6-4	302	9/22/70	4	Penn State

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	21	Renaldo Wynn	DT	6-2	296	Notre Dame
2	50	Mike Logan	DB	6-0	203	West Virginia
3	79	James Hamilton	LB	6-4	237	North Carolina
4	114	Seth Payne	DT	6-4	306	Cornell
5	147	Damon Jones	TE	6-5	282	Southern Illinois
6	184	Daimon Shelton	RB	6-0	250	Cal. St.-Sacramento
7	221	Jon Hesse	LB	6-4	250	Nebraska



Quarterback hole or not, the Steelers won't stray from their hard-nosed personality.

After the Steelers were blown out of the playoffs, 28-3, by New England last January, the Pittsburgh brass gathered to chart the team's future course. They didn't kid themselves. December had been a debacle, too, with three losses in four games and the failure to score more than 17 points in any of those games.

They knew they couldn't go any further with journeyman **Mike Tomczak** at quarterback. Western Pennsylvania was awash with rumors, the most persistent of which was that disgruntled former Falcons quarterback Jeff George would be signed to fill the position that had been the team's weak spot since Neil O'Donnell defected to the Jets as a free agent after Super Bowl XXX. Tom Donahoe, the Steelers' director of football operations, put an end to the George rumor. "That," said Donahoe, "would be like Madonna marrying Bob Dole."

Chemistry Test

Quarterback hole or not, the Steelers are still about team chemistry. Kordell "Slash" Stewart, the running/passing goal-line threat, may not be an NFL quarterback. Jim Miller may not be any better than he was in his opening-game audition last year, after which he was demoted. Nevertheless, the Steelers will not stray from their hard-nosed personality, even if they have to make do with Tomczak once again.

It won't be easy. NFL teams with plenty of room under their salary caps, especially expansion teams Carolina and Jacksonville, were like buzzards picking at the Steelers' carcass. In the opening weeks of free agency alone, Pittsburgh lost starting cornerbacks Willie Williams and Deon Figures, pass rusher Ray Seals, wide receiver Ernie Mills, and, most grievously of all, Pro Bowl linebacker Chad Brown, who recorded 13 of the Steelers' conference-high 51 sacks. By drafting **Chad Scott**, the Steelers said good-bye to one of their all-time stars, battered cornerback Rod Woodson, who led the team with six interceptions.

Cutting Their Losses

If Scott, a safety from Maryland, can start right away, strong safety **Carnell Lake** could switch to cornerback, as he did two years ago when the Steelers won the AFC championship. Another rookie, **Mike Vrabel** of Ohio State, could help the depleted pass rush.

Lake, even playing out of position, may be the best cornerback left. He does it all, and last season he even returned a fumble against Jacksonville 85 yards for a touchdown. Free-agent cornerback **Donnell Woolford** was signed from Chicago. **Myron Bell** is likely to take Lake's job at strong safety, with free safety **Darren Perry** the lone holdover in the secondary. **Kirk Pointer**, a development-squad graduate, adds depth.

With Brentson Buckner traded to Kansas City, nose tackle **Joel Steed** and right end **Kevin Henry** are the sole seasoned hands on the line. The inexperienced **Orpheus Roye** and **Israel Rayborn** will compete for Buckner's position.

Steel Tough

Linebacking remains the team's strongest defensive area, even without Brown. **Greg Lloyd** returns at the right outside spot to reclaim his leadership role. **Levon Kirkland**, who does wondrous things with his bulk, plays alongside Lloyd in the 3-4 set. **Jerry Olsavsky** will be pressed by **Earl Holmes** at left inside linebacker. **Jason Gildon** had a strong second half of the season in his first year as the left outside backer.

Running for Cover

Offensively, Pittsburgh will rise or fall once again with **Jerome Bettis**, whom they signed to a rich contract. Bettis rediscovered his enthusiasm after coming from St. Louis in a trade. He averaged 4.5 yards per carry and scored 11 touchdowns. His total of 1,431

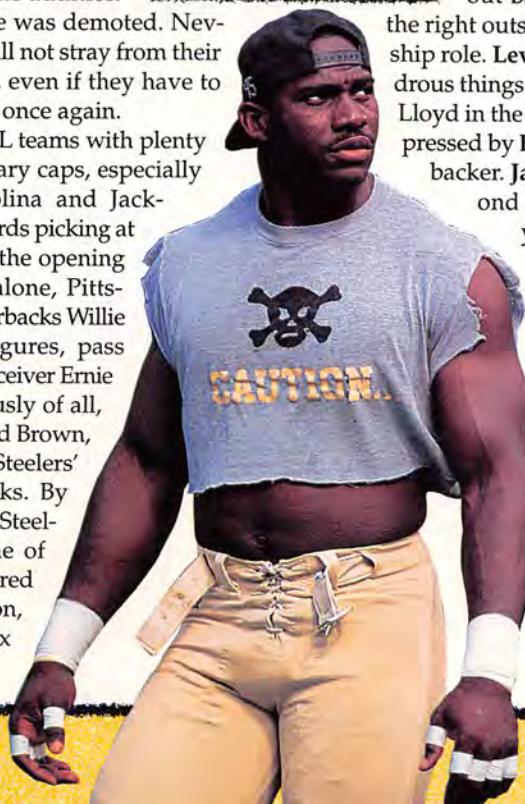
the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	321.3	15
Passing	177.6	27
Rushing	143.7	2
Scoring	21.5	11
Punting	40.7	27
Punt Returns	6.3	28
Kick Returns	22.1	T13
Total Defense	272.6	2
Against Pass	184.2	5
Against Run	88.4	3
Points Allowed	16.1	T4
Interceptions	23	T4
Sacks	51	2



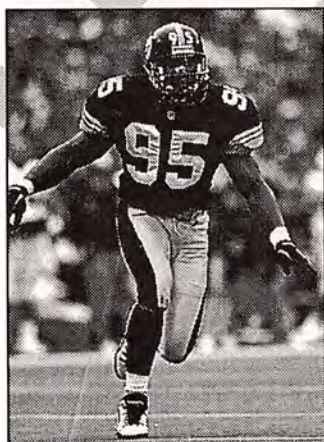
Carnell Lake (above, at top) will be joined in the Pittsburgh secondary by free agent **Donnell Woolford** (above, bottom).



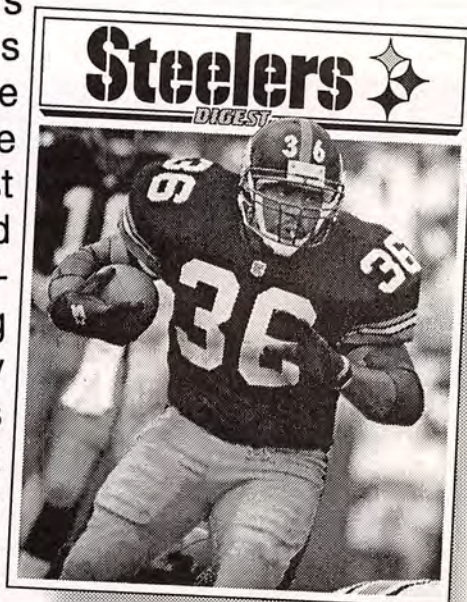
Greg Lloyd (at left) is back in business at outside linebacker.

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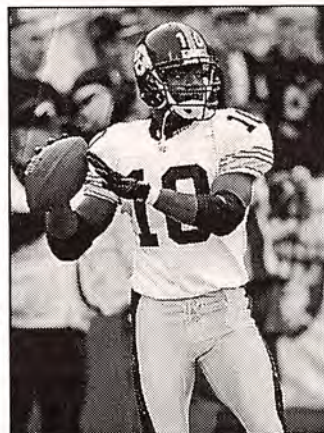
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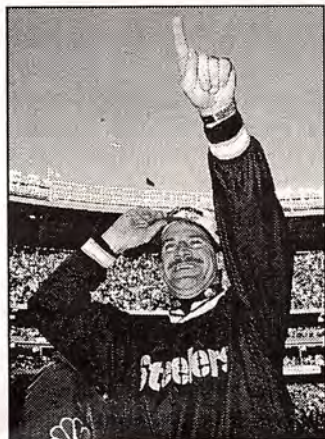


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the key stats

The Steelers had the AFC's top defense, allowing just 272.6 yards per game. **Jerome Bettis** was the first running back in the NFL to gain 1,000 yards last season. He set career-highs with 320 carries, 1,431 yards, and 11 touchdowns. **Kordell Stewart's** 80-yard touchdown was the longest scoring run by a quarterback in league history.



Yancey Thigpen (at right, above) set a club record with 85 catches in 1995, but sat out more than half the '96 season with injuries.

yards rushing was second in the AFC. The playoffs might have been a cheerier time for the Steelers had he been fully healthy. **Erric Pegram** ran for 509 yards and Stewart for 171, 80 of which came on one play.

The veteran Tomczak completed over 55 percent of his passes for 2,767 yards and 15 touchdowns with 17 interceptions. Miller and Stewart combined for just 55 pass attempts. Whoever plays quarterback will be throwing to **Andre Hastings**, who caught a team-leading 72 passes; **Charles Johnson**, who finally blossomed with a 1,000-yard season; and the inconsistent **Yancey Thigpen**. The draft brought **Will Blackwell** of San Diego State. Tight end **Mark Bruener**, mostly a blocker up until now, will become more important to the passing game.

Fine Line

The offensive line dipped slightly in the playoffs, but it is an impressive unit. The constant is **Dermontti Dawson**, the center who will probably follow his predecessor, Mike Webster, to the Hall of Fame. When **Will Wolford** was signed and switched to left guard, that stabilized the play of left tackle John Jackson. **Justin Strzelczyk**, who has bounced all over during his pro career, settled at right tackle and had an outstanding year. **Brendan Stai** underwent in-season elbow surgery and wasn't the same player afterwards. He may be challenged by Jamain Stephens, last year's top draftee, who didn't play a down.

Rookie wide receiver **Michael Adams** of Texas could upgrade the return game. The Steelers did not have a player in the top 10 in punt returns or kick returns. The punting could be better as well. **Josh Miller** averaged 41 yards but had the lowest net average (33.6 yards) in the AFC. **Norm Johnson** hit 23 of 30 field goals and led the team with 106 points.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Bill Cowher, Head Coach

Chan Gailey, Offensive Coordinator; Jim Haslett, Defensive Coordinator; Mike Archer, Linebackers; David Culley, Wide Receivers; Dick Hoak, Running Backs; Tim Lewis, Defensive Backs; John Mitchell, Defensive Line; Mike Mularkey, Tight Ends; Kent Stephenson, Offensive Line; Ron Zook, Special Teams

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
16	Miller, Jim	QB	6-2	210	2/9/71	3	Michigan State
10	Stewart, Kordell	QB	6-1	212	10/16/72	2	Colorado
18	Tomczak, Mike	QB	6-1	202	10/23/62	12	Ohio State
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
72	Dafney, Bernard	T	6-5	329	11/1/68	5	Tennessee
63	Dawson, Dermontti	C	6-2	288	6/17/65	9	Kentucky
65	Jackson, John	T	6-6	297	1/4/65	9	Eastern Kentucky
62	Myslinski, Tom	G	6-3	287	12/7/68	5	Tennessee
68	Stai, Brenden	G	6-4	307	3/30/72	2	Nebraska
67	Stephens, Jamain	T	6-5	315	1/9/74	1	North Carolina A&T
73	Strzelczyk, Justin	G	6-6	291	8/18/68	7	Maine
66	Sweeney, Jim	C	6-4	295	8/8/62	13	Pittsburgh
77	Wolford, Will	T	6-5	295	5/18/64	11	Vanderbilt
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
36	Bettis, Jerome	RB	5-11	243	2/16/72	4	Notre Dame
34	Lester, Tim	RB	5-9	227	6/15/68	5	Eastern Kentucky
25	McAfee, Fred	RB	5-10	193	6/20/68	6	Mississippi College
20	Pegram, Erric	RB	5-10	195	1/7/69	6	North Texas
30	Phillips, Bobby	RB	5-9	187	12/8/69	2	Virginia Union
44	Richardson, Terry	RB	6-1	204	10/8/71	3	Syracuse
38	Witman, Jon	RB	6-2	242	6/1/72	1	Penn State
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Arnold, Jahine	WR	6-2	187	06/19/73	1	Fresno State
85	Bailey, Henry	WR	5-9	183	2/28/73	1	UNLV
84	Botkin, Kirk	TE	6-3	245	03/19/71	3	Arkansas
87	Bruener, Mark	TE	6-4	254	9/16/72	2	Washington
86	Farquhar, John	TE	6-6	240	3/22/72	1	Duke
83	Holliday, Corey	WR	6-2	208	1/31/71	2	North Carolina
81	Johnson, Charles	WR	6-1	193	1/3/72	3	Colorado
81	Kearney, Jay	WR	6-1	199	9/29/71	3	West Virginia
86	Lyons, Mitch	TE	6-4	265	5/13/70	4	Michigan State
82	Thigpen, Yancey	WR	6-1	206	8/15/69	6	Winston-Salem State
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
98	Gibson, Oliver	DT	6-2	283	3/15/72	2	Notre Dame
76	Henry, Kevin	DE	6-4	282	10/23/68	4	Mississippi State
98	Mayfield, Corey	DT	6-3	302	2/25/70	5	Oklahoma
91	Raybon, Israel	DE	6-6	293	2/5/73	1	North Alabama
71	Royce, Orpheus	DE	6-3	295	1/21/74	1	Florida State
93	Steed, Joel	NT	6-2	300	2/17/69	5	Colorado
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
40	Bell, Myron	S	5-11	203	9/15/71	3	Michigan State
37	Brown, J.B.	CB	6-1	191	1/5/67	8	Maryland
41	Flowers, Lethon	CB	6-1	207	1/14/73	2	Georgia Tech
37	Lake, Carnell	CB	6-1	210	7/15/67	8	UCLA
24	Oldham, Chris	CB	5-9	193	10/26/68	7	Oregon
39	Perry, Darren	S	5-11	196	12/29/68	5	Penn State
23	Pointer, Kirk	CB	5-11	178	2/13/74	1	Austin Peay
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
53	Conley, Steve	LB	6-1	231	1/18/72	1	Arkansas
51	Emmons, Carlos	LB	6-4	240	9/3/73	1	Arkansas State
50	Holmes, Earl	LB	6-1	238	4/28/73	1	Florida A&M
54	Jones, Donta	LB	6-2	226	8/27/72	2	Nebraska
99	Kirkland, Levon	LB	6-1	264	2/17/69	5	Clemson
95	Lloyd, Greg	LB	6-2	228	5/26/65	9	Fort Valley State
55	Olsavsky, Jerry	LB	6-1	221	3/29/67	8	Pittsburgh
57	Ravotti, Eric	LB	6-3	250	3/16/71	3	Penn State
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
9	Johnson, Norm	K	6-2	202	5/31/60	15	UCLA
4	Miller, Josh	P	6-3	215	7/14/70	1	Arizona
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
29	Fuller, Randy	CB	5-10	185	6/2/70	3	Tennessee State
92	Gildon, Jason	LB	6-3	245	7/31/72	3	Oklahoma State
88	Hastings, Andre*	WR	6-1	190	11/7/70	4	Georgia
85	Hayes, Jonathan*	TE	6-5	248	8/11/62	12	Iowa
90	Johnson, Bill*	DE	6-4	311	12/9/68	5	Michigan State
26	Woodson, Rod*	CB	6-0	200	3/10/65	10	Purdue

* Unrestricted Free Agents

* Unrestricted Free Agents

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	24	Chad Scott	DB	6-1	203	Maryland
2	53	Will Blackwell	WR	6-0	184	San Diego State
3	82	Paul Wiggins	T	6-3	303	Oregon
3	91	Mike Vrabel	DE	6-4	270	Ohio State
5	154	George Jones	RB	5-9	204	San Diego State
6	186	Daryl Porter	DB	5-9	188	Boston College
6	199	Rod Manuel	DE	6-5	281	Oklahoma
7	223	Michael Adams	WR	5-11	184	Texas

CINCINNATI BENGALS



Cincinnati lives with the pass, since no Bengals running back has gained 100 yards in 65 games.

The Bengals need a healthy Ki-Jana Carter (below).

Maybe the Bengals should have made the decision to change coaches, from David Shula to **Bruce Coslet**, a lot sooner. It took a huge cave-in against the 49ers in San Francisco, with Cincinnati dissipating a 21-point lead, which dropped the team record to 1-6. Once Coslet took over, the Bengals won seven of their last nine games.

Coslet in Command

Coslet might have failed as head coach of the Jets, but he's in his comfort zone in Cincinnati, where he played as a pro and then served as offensive coordinator under Sam Wyche. Now that he's in full command, Coslet lured Dick LeBeau from Pittsburgh to serve as his defensive coordinator. LeBeau's Steeler defense ranked third and second in the AFC in his two years in Pittsburgh. He spent the 12 previous seasons on the Bengals' staff. LeBeau will install the 3-4 defense in Cincinnati with an emphasis on the type of zone blitzing which has been so effective for teams like Carolina and Pittsburgh.

The draft was a mixed bag. Coslet welcomes two players who may help immediately: Florida State pass rusher **Reinard Wilson** and Michigan center **Rod Payne**. Also drafted were two outstanding college stars with depressing rap sheets: Washington running back **Corey Dillon** and Mia-

mi safety **Tremain Mack**. Dillon could be the season-saving insurance policy for **Ki-Jana Carter**, and Mack could be a special-teams' dynamo.

Hot Hands

The offense still lives with the pass, since no Cincinnati back has enjoyed a 100-yard day in 65 consecutive games. That's O.K., as long as quarterback **Jeff Blake** has a season as hot as his last five games, when his touchdown-pass to interception ratio was 13-3. In that stretch, he threw for 1,376 of his 3,624 yards. In his other games, Blake's ratio was 11-11.

Part of that improvement can be attributed to

Ken Anderson, who was promoted to offensive coordinator when Coslet, his old battery mate on the Bengals, became the head coach. Anderson and Coslet have worked well together. Before the coaching change, the Bengals averaged 18 points per game; after the change, they averaged 28 per game.

NFL cornerbacks are no match for wide receiver **Carl Pickens**, who has his way with them because of his size and speed. He caught 100 passes, a dozen for touchdowns. **David Dunn**, whose 24 third-down catches averaged 17 yards, may wrest the starting job from **Darnay Scott**, who had 58 catches. If **Marco Battaglia** recovers from an unimpressive rookie year, he has a chance to overtake starting tight end **Tony McGee**, who is coming off a disappointing season.

Carrying On

Still suffering the aftereffects of serious knee surgery, Carter, the 1995 draft's top pick, ran for 264 yards, averaging just 2.9 yards a carry. He lost his job to Garrison Hearst, who has since departed via free agency for San Francisco. But Coslet did a wise thing last year. Trying to rehabilitate Carter's confidence on the goal line, Coslet removed Hearst and gave the ball to Carter, who scored eight touchdowns. But he reported to mini-camp more than 10 pounds overweight. If Carter can't come back all the way, Dillon is option B.

The Bengals need a big improvement in their offensive line, which surrendered 44 sacks. **Kevin Sargent** has to come back strong from surgery on a herniated neck disk to win the job at left tackle. That would allow **Willie Anderson** to be switched

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	326.6	10
Passing	214.5	12
Rushing	112.1	13
Scoring	23.3	5
Punting	44.3	8
Punt Returns	6.6	27
Kick Returns	20.8	25
Total Defense	341.8	25
Against Pass	239.1	29
Against Run	102.7	12
Points Allowed	23.1	23
Interceptions	34	1
Sacks	32	T21

Dan Wilkinson (below, center) will be a force at nose tackle.



the key stats

Carl Pickens needs 79 catches to pass **Cris Collinsworth** (417) as Cincinnati's career leader. The Bengals established a team mark with a league-high 34 interceptions. They were also first in the league in turnover differential (+19). **Doug Pelfrey** is the NFL's all-time leader in field-goal percentage accuracy (81.25 on 104 of 128).

to right tackle. Cincinnati matched New England's offer sheet to left guard **Rich Braham**. **Ken Blackman**, tough but rough around the edges, is the right guard. **Darrick Brilz** is a dependable center.

Defensive Keys

The key man in LeBeau's new defense is linebacker **James Francis**, who could do for Cincinnati what Kevin Greene did



Quarterback Jeff Blake (at left) threw for 3,624 yards and wide receiver Carl Pickens (above) caught 100 passes for the Bengals last year.

for Carolina. Francis had three sacks last year, but that number could increase under the new setup. The draft was a disappointment because no quality linebacker was taken and little depth was added. The returning starters are **Steve Tovar** on the inside and **Ricardo McDonald** on the outside. **Ed Sutter** of Baltimore was signed as a free agent. If Wilson can be restyled into the blitzer LeBeau wants—no small task—it could make a difference on the unit. He led the ACC with 11 sacks.

Making Their Move

Dan Wilkinson will try his third position in three seasons, nose tackle, in LeBeau's 3-4 alignment. Cincinnati needs a huge season from Wilkinson and left end **John Copeland** in order to make a serious move toward the top of the AFC Central. Right end **Jevon Langford** is a promising pass rusher, but the Bengals need someone to stop the run.

Cornerback **Ashley Ambrose** intercepted eight passes and went to the Pro Bowl and **Jimmy Spencer** played on the other side. Strong safety **Bracey Walker** was re-signed. Free safety **Bo Orlando** led the team with 139 tackles.

The kicking game, with **Doug Pelfrey** and punter **Lee Johnson**, is strong. Mack could boost the return game, where the Bengals did not have a top 10 finisher in the league.

CINCINNATI BENGALS

Bruce Coslet, Head Coach

Ken Anderson, Offensive Coordinator; Dick LeBeau, Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator; Paul Alexander, Offensive Line; Jim Anderson, Running Backs; Bob Wylie, Tight Ends; Tim Krumrie, Defensive Line; Mark Duffner, Linebackers; Ray Horton, Defensive Backs; Al Roberts, Special Teams; John Garrett, Offensive Staff Assistant; Louie Cioffi, Defensive Staff Assistant; Kim Wood, Strength and Conditioning

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
8	Blake, Jeff	QB	6-1	202	12/4/70	5 East Carolina
7	Esiason, Boomer	QB	6-5	224	4/17/61	13 Maryland
12	Joseph, Kerry	QB	6-1	205	10/4/73	1 McNeese State
4	Wilhelm, Erik	QB	6-3	217	11/19/65	8 Oregon State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
71	Anderson, Willie	T	6-5	325	7/11/75	1 Auburn
66	Blackman, Ken	G	6-6	315	11/8/72	1 Illinois
65	Brilz, Darrick	C	6-3	287	2/14/64	10 Oregon State
75	Brown, Anthony	T	6-5	310	11/6/72	2 Utah
72	Brumfield, Scott	G	6-8	320	08/19/70	4 Brigham Young
62	Gutierrez, Brock	C	6-4	290	9/25/73	1 Central Michigan
60	Jones, Rod	G	6-4	315	1/11/74	1 Kansas
76	Pollard, Trent	G	6-4	330	11/20/72	3 Eastern Washington
77	Sargent, Kevin	T	6-6	284	3/31/69	5 Eastern Washington
59	Truitt, Greg	C	6-1	235	12/8/65	3 Penn State
61	Tuten, Melvin	T	6-6	305	11/11/71	2 Syracuse
63	Walter, Joe	T	6-7	292	6/18/63	12 Texas Tech

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Bieniemy, Eric	RB	5-7	198	8/15/69	6 Colorado
32	Carter, Ki-Jana	RB	5-10	227	9/12/73	2 Penn State
29	Cothran, Jeff	RB	6-1	249	6/28/71	3 Ohio State
31	Graham, Scottie	RB	5-9	222	3/28/69	5 Ohio State
44	Milne, Brian	RB	6-3	257	1/7/73	1 Penn State

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
89	Battaglia, Marco	TE	6-3	250	1/25/73	1 Rutgers
80	Dunn, David	WR	6-3	210	6/10/72	2 Fresno State
84	Hill, Jeff	WR	5-11	178	9/24/72	3 Purdue
85	Hundon, James	WR	6-1	195	4/9/71	1 Portland State
83	Jordan, Kevin	WR	6-2	190	12/14/72	1 UCLA
82	McGee, Tony	TE	6-3	246	4/21/71	4 Michigan
81	Pickens, Carl	WR	6-2	206	3/23/70	5 Tennessee
87	Sadowski, Troy	TE	6-5	250	12/8/65	7 Georgia
17	Twyner, Gunnard	WR	5-10	167	7/14/73	1 Western Illinois

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
92	Copeland, John	DE	6-3	286	9/20/70	4 Alabama
90	Johnson, Tim	DT	6-3	286	1/29/65	10 Penn State
94	Langford, Jevon	DE	6-3	275	2/16/74	1 Oklahoma State
93	Morabito, Tim	DT	6-3	288	10/12/73	1 Boston College
70	Smith, Artie	DT	6-4	285	5/15/70	4 Louisiana Tech
79	Stallings, Ramondo	DE	6-7	285	11/21/71	3 San Diego State
67	von Oelhoffen, Kimo	DT	6-4	300	1/30/71	3 Boise State
99	Wilkinson, Dan	DT	6-5	313	3/13/73	3 Ohio State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
33	Ambrose, Ashley	CB	5-10	192	9/17/70	5 Mississippi Valley State
27	Borgella, Jocelyn	CB	5-10	180	8/26/71	3 Cincinnati
24	Jones, Roger	CB	5-9	175	4/22/69	6 Tennessee State
31	Myers, Greg	S	6-1	197	9/30/72	1 Colorado State
26	Orlando, Bo	S	5-10	180	4/3/66	7 West Virginia
23	Sawyer, Corey	CB	5-11	171	10/4/71	3 Florida State
35	Shade, Sam	S	6-1	191	6/14/73	2 Alabama
22	Spencer, Jimmy	CB	5-9	180	3/29/69	5 Florida
27	Walker, Bracey	S	6-1	200	10/28/70	3 North Carolina

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
51	Dixon, Gerald	LB	6-3	250	6/20/69	4 South Carolina
50	Francis, James	LB	6-5	252	8/4/68	7 Baylor
56	McDonald, Ricardo	LB	6-2	240	11/8/69	5 Pittsburgh
52	Neal, Randy	LB	6-3	236	12/29/72	2 Virginia
54	Sutter, Eddie	LB	6-3	235	10/3/69	4 Northwestern
58	Tovar, Steve	LB	6-3	244	4/25/70	4 Ohio State
53	Tumulty, Tom	LB	6-2	242	2/11/73	1 Pittsburgh

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Johnson, Lee	P	6-2	200	11/27/61	12 Brigham Young
9	Pelfrey, Doug	K	5-11	185	9/25/70	4 Kentucky

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
74	Braham, Rich	G	6-4	290	11/6/70	3	West Virginia
55	Collins, Andre	LB	6-1	231	5/4/68	7	Penn State
25	Jones, Rod*	CB	6-0	185	3/31/64	11	SMU
86	Scott, Darnay	WR	6-1	180	7/7/72	3	San Diego State
91	Wallerstedt, Brett*	LB	6-1	240	11/24/70	4	Arizona State
37	Wheeler, Leonard	DB	6-0	198	1/15/69	5	Troy State

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	14	Reinard Wilson	DE	6-2	259	Florida State
2	43	Corey Dillon	RB	6-2	220	Washington
3	76	Rod Payne	C	6-4	305	Michigan
4	111	Tremain Mack	DB	6-0	195	Miami
5	144	Andre Purvis	DT	6-5	290	North Carolina
6	176	Canute Curtis	LB	6-2	250	West Virginia
7	217	William Carr	DT	6-0	269	Michigan



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HOUSTON OILERS



Lame ducks or not, the Oilers have enough young offensive talent to be dangerous.

The Oilers are the ultimate lame ducks. For the second straight season they will play in a hostile city before small home crowds in the Astrodome while they await the exit to their new comfort zone, Nashville. The Oilers were 2-6 at home last year, 6-2 on the road.

Houston, We Have a Problem

That can take the stomach out of a team as young as the Oilers. When few come to the game, and far fewer care whether the Oilers win or lose, it rips the incentive out of the players. When they look forward to the road trips, it is a major handicap. **Jeff Fisher**, Houston's bright young head coach, has maintained a positive outlook, but how often can he tell his players to "think ahead to Nashville," when they are still getting their haircuts and shopping in supermarkets in Houston? And three of the veterans who helped the Oilers stay focused last season are gone.

Steve and Eddie

Lame ducks or not, the Oilers have enough young talent to be dangerous this season. Their future is **Steve McNair** passing the ball and **Eddie George** carrying it. McNair, groomed and nurtured like a yearling for two years, begins running the stakes races this season. George, the former Heisman Trophy winner, has already established his reputation. He had 1,368 yards rushing as a rookie.

Fisher fired his offensive coordinator, Jerry Rhome, and installed veteran aide Les Steckel as McNair's tutor. The patient handling seems to have equipped McNair with the right stuff. Unlike most young quarterbacks, McNair doesn't often force the ball. He also knows when to take something off his rocket passes when a lighter touch is required. And his running ability may eventually be as important to the Oilers as Mark Brunell's is to Jacksonville.

George should have an expanded role under Steckel, who wants to use him as a receiver more often. There is depth on the roster, with **Rodney Thomas**, another good runner, and veteran third-

down back **Ronnie Harmon**. **Frank Wycheck**, who played H-back as an Oiler, led the team with 53 receptions and scored six touchdowns. Steckel, however, will try to find someone to play fullback more often, so Wycheck's role may change.

The strong-armed McNair has to become good friends with **Chris Sanders**, who has the speed to give the Oilers a dangerous deep threat. Sanders averaged 18.4 yards on his 48 catches, yet he has the capacity to contribute much more. **Willie Davis** is a tough receiver around the goal line. Rookie **Joey Kent** of Tennessee, who requires some polish, still caught 137 passes for 13 touchdowns while playing with Peyton Manning the last two seasons.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	315.5	18
Passing	193.6	21
Rushing	121.9	6
Scoring	21.6	10
Punting	43.7	T9
Punt Returns	9.6	T16
Kick Returns	21.5	20
Total Defense	288.1	6
Against Pass	201.6	13
Against Run	86.6	2
Points Allowed	19.9	16
Interceptions	12	T25
Sacks	35	T15

Running Line

The front office did the right thing by re-signing left tackle **Brad Hopkins**, who has fully developed. That gives the Oilers a solid front line with the venerable **Bruce Matthews**, who was revitalized by a Pro Bowl year at left guard; **Mark Stepnoski**, who remains one of the NFL's top centers; and right guard **Kevin Donnalley**. Huge **Jon Runyan** should make a run at **Irv Eatman's** job at right tackle.

Across the line, Houston's defense did well enough against the run (a yield of just 86.6 yards per game and five touchdowns in 1996), but it was gouged in the air, giving up 24 touchdowns. The Oilers need to apply more pressure and increase their sack total.

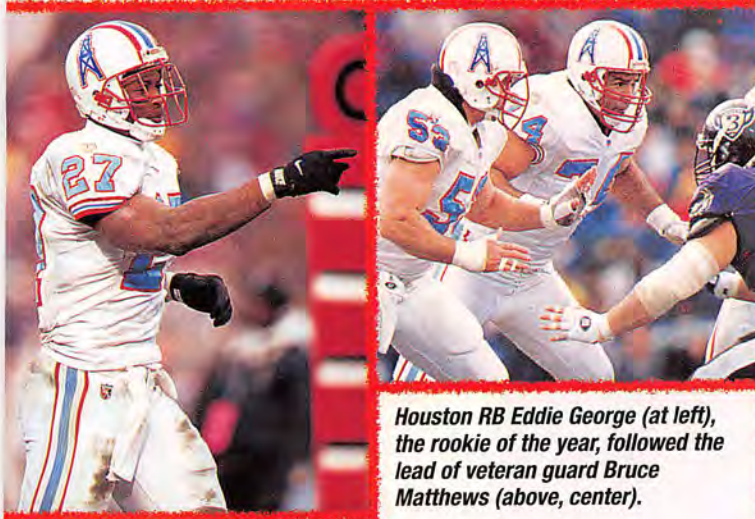
Blaine Bishop (below) gives the Oilers' a safety valve.



Houston's future is in the hands of quarterback **Steve McNair** (above).

the key stats

Al Del Greco had the longest field goal in the NFL in '96 (56 yards). He was third in the league in scoring (131 points). **Eddie George** was third in the AFC in rushing (1,368 yards). **Steve McNair** completed 61.5 percent of his passes for 1,197 yards. His 90.6 rating was higher than that of any starting quarterback in the conference.



Houston RB Eddie George (at left), the rookie of the year, followed the lead of veteran guard Bruce Matthews (above, center).

Coping With Losses

The defense suffered two major losses which it couldn't afford. Linebacker Micheal Barrow signed with Carolina, and Cris Dishman, still a strong coverage corner, signed with Washington. The loss of Barrow is devastating, not only because of his skill and leadership, but because of the variety of roles he filled so effectively. Houston released longtime middle linebacker Al Smith, replacing him with **Barron Wortham**. **Joe Bowden** is the most complete linebacker.

The top sacker was end **Anthony Cook** (7.5). **Gary Walker** and **Henry Ford** are the starting tackles, with **Robert Young** at right end. Defensive end **Kenny Holmes** of Miami, the team's No. 1 draft choice, is primarily a pass rusher. He is not yet strong enough against the run and could struggle as a rookie until he is able to take on some of the big linemen who will be blocking him. **Bryant Mix** could make a move in his second pro season. **Lonnie Marts** was signed as a free agent from Tampa Bay, where he thrived under Tony Dungy's defensive system. He had seven sacks, a total the Oilers, of course, would welcome.

Secondary Schooled

Veteran **Steve Jackson** was re-signed and should fill Dishman's spot at left corner since rookie **Denard Walker** doesn't appear ready. The rest of the secondary is capable, with **Blaine Bishop** at strong safety, **Marcus Robertson** at free safety, and **Darryll Lewis** at right cornerback. **Rayna Stewart** is a rising star at safety.

Derrick Mason of Michigan State, one of the best kickoff and punt returners in the Big Ten, is likely to push **Mel Gray** out of a job. **Al Del Greco**, with 131 points, was a large part of the Oiler offense. Punter **Reggie Roby** had a career high 25 punts land inside the 10-yard line.

HOUSTON OILERS

Jeff Fisher, Head Coach

Les Steckel, Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks; Gregg Williams, Defensive Coordinator; Bart Andrus, Offensive Assistant/Quality Control; Greg Brown, Defensive Backs; O'Neill Gilbert, Linebackers; Jerry Gray, Defensive Assistant/Quality Control; George Henshaw, Offensive Line/Tight Ends; Alan Lowry, Wide Receivers; Mike Munchak, Offensive Line; Rex Norris, Defensive Line; Russ Purnell, Special Teams; Sherman Smith, Running Backs; Steve Watterson, Strength/Rehabilitation

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Krieg, Dave	QB	6-1	202	10/20/58	17 Milton College
9	McNair, Steve	QB	6-2	224	2/14/73	2 Alcorn State
16	Ritchey, James	QB	6-2	218	7/10/73	1 Stephen F. Austin

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
77	Donnalley, Kevin	G	6-5	305	6/10/68	6 North Carolina
75	Eatman, Irv	T	6-7	305	1/1/61	11 UCLA
60	El-Mashtoub, Hicham	C	6-2	288	5/11/72	2 Arizona
71	Hayes, Melvin	T	6-6	329	4/28/73	2 Mississippi State
72	Hopkins, Brad	T	6-3	306	9/5/70	4 Illinois
66	Layman, Jason	T	6-5	306	7/29/73	1 Tennessee
74	Matthews, Bruce	G	6-5	298	8/8/61	14 Southern California
64	Norgard, Erik	G	6-1	282	11/4/65	7 Colorado
67	Reid, Jim	T	6-6	306	2/13/71	2 Virginia
69	Runyan, Jon	T	6-7	308	11/27/73	1 Michigan
53	Stepnoski, Mark	C	6-2	269	1/20/67	8 Pittsburgh

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
32	Archie, Mike	RB	5-8	205	10/14/72	1 Penn State
27	George, Eddie	RB	6-3	232	9/24/73	1 Ohio State
33	Harmon, Ronnie	RB	5-11	200	5/7/64	11 Iowa
20	Thomas, Rodney	RB	5-10	213	3/30/73	2 Texas A&M

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Davis, Willie	WR	6-1	181	10/10/67	6 Central Arkansas
21	Gray, Mel	WR	5-9	171	3/16/61	11 Purdue
87	McKeehan, James	TE	6-3	251	8/9/73	2 Texas A&M
80	Roan, Michael	TE	6-3	251	8/29/72	2 Wisconsin
85	Russell, Derek	WR	6-1	195	7/22/69	6 Arkansas
81	Sanders, Chris	WR	6-1	184	5/8/72	2 Ohio State
82	Wilson, Sheddric	WR	6-2	210	11/23/73	1 Louisiana State
89	Wycheck, Frank	TE	6-3	247	10/14/71	4 Maryland

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Burton, Kendrick	DE	6-5	288	9/7/73	1 Alabama
78	Cook, Anthony	DT	6-3	293	5/30/72	2 South Carolina State
91	Evans, Josh	DT	6-1	280	9/6/72	2 Alabama-Birmingham
92	Ford, Henry	DE	6-3	284	10/30/71	3 Arkansas
93	Halapin, Mike	DT	6-4	294	7/1/73	1 Pittsburgh
97	Mix, Bryant	DE	6-3	301	7/28/72	1 Alcorn State
96	Walker, Gary	DT	6-2	285	2/28/73	2 Auburn
99	Young, Robert	DE	6-6	273	1/29/69	6 Mississippi State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
30	Dorsett, Anthony	CB	5-11	203	9/14/73	1 Pittsburgh
24	Jackson, Steve	CB	5-8	182	4/8/69	6 Purdue
29	Lewis, Darryll	CB	5-9	183	12/16/68	6 Arizona
31	Robertson, Marcus	S	5-11	197	10/2/69	6 Iowa State
37	Robinson, Rafael	S	5-11	200	06/19/69	5 Wisconsin
26	Stewart, Rayna	CB	5-10	192	6/18/73	1 Northern Arizona

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Bowden, Joe	LB	5-11	230	2/25/70	5 Oklahoma
51	Hall, Lemanski	LB	6-1	229	11/24/70	3 Alabama
57	Jones, Lenoy	LB	6-1	232	9/25/74	1 Texas Christian
50	Killens, Terry	LB	6-1	232	3/24/74	1 Penn State
51	Marts, Lonnie	LB	6-2	240	11/10/68	6 Tulane

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Del Greco, Al	K	5-10	200	3/2/62	13 Auburn
7	Roby, Reggie	P	6-3	258	7/30/61	14 Iowa

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP	COLLEGE
23	Bishop, Blaine	S	5-9	197	7/24/70	4	Ball State
39	Cole, Lee*	CB	5-11	188	6/25/74	1	Arizona State
83	Floyd, Malcolm	WR	6-0	194	12/29/72	3	Fresno State
88	Lewis, Roderick	TE	6-5	254	6/9/71	3	Arizona
55	Mills, John*	LB	6-0	222	10/31/69	4	Wake Forest
90	Roberson, James*	DE	6-3	275	5/3/71	1	Florida State
52	Wortham, Barron	LB	5-11	244	11/1/69	3	Texas-El Paso

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	18	Kenny Holmes	DE	6-4	270	Miami
2	46	Joey Kent	WR	6-1	186	Tennessee
3	75	Denard Walker	DB	6-1	186	Louisiana State
3	81	Scott Sanderson	T	6-6	290	Washington State
4	98	Derrick Mason	WR	5-10	193	Michigan State
4	107	Pratt Lyons	DE	6-5	278	Troy State
5	143	George McCullough	DB	5-10	187	Baylor
6	181	Dennis Stallings	LB	6-0	234	Illinois
7	216	Armon Williams	LB	6-0	223	Arizona

BALTIMORE RAVENS



The Ravens arranged an instant pass rush with the acquisition of three players in late April.

The salary cap curses many NFL teams, but Baltimore more than most. The Ravens can't seem to figure out how to deal with it. They're still harnessed by unrealistic contracts they handed out to players no longer with the team, a hangover from the giddy reaction to an unusual 11-5 season in 1994.

Nevermore?

That's why they lost players they couldn't afford to lose. Once again team owner Art Modell will not win the NFL executive of the year. Cleveland may be better off with the expansion team that is scheduled to arrive in 1999. The Ravens are counting on too many uncertainties: quarterback Vinny Testaverde, running back Bam Morris, and tight end Eric Green.

Three to Get Ready

Testaverde had a career season in '96, leading the AFC in touchdown passes. He became the first quarterback from a sub-.500 team to throw for at least 4,000 yards (4,177) and 30 touchdowns (33). He flourished under the sensitive handling of coach Ted Marchibroda and was selected to his first Pro Bowl.

Yet the passing game is a fragile structure, and Testaverde's protective cocoon has been disturbed. How he will react to the turmoil in the offensive line will be the key factor.

The troubled Morris was not cleared from his league-imposed drug suspension until week six of the 1996 season. In the last seven games, however, he was the AFC's leading rusher. He finished the season with 737 yards. The Ravens think they can count on him for the future. Good luck. With Carwell Gardner now a Charger, the fail-safe for Marchibroda is third-round pick Jay Graham of Tennessee.

Vinny Testaverde (left) had a career year with the Ravens.

Green's checkered past is just part of the worry with him. The massive tight end could be a vital target for Testaverde, but there is no assurance that his surgically repaired right knee will hold up. In case it doesn't, incumbent **Brian Kinchen** is always ready to play.

Two for the Show

Testaverde has a pair of 1,000-yard receivers in **Michael Jackson**, who caught 76 passes for 1,201 yards and 14 touchdowns, and **Derrick Alexander**, who caught 62 passes for 1,099 yards and nine touchdowns. They were the top scoring duo in the league.

If return ace **Jermaine Lewis** develops, he could push **Floyd Turner** as the slot receiver.

Line Drives

Center Steve Everitt defected to the Eagles via free agency and **Wally Williams**, his successor, suffered a ruptured Achilles tendon in minicamp and will be unavailable until at least midseason. Into the breach steps **Jeff Mitchell**, a smart rookie from Florida whose own senior season was ended prematurely by a broken ankle. **Jonathan Ogden**, last year's super rookie, moves from left

guard to left tackle. Huge **Jeff Blakeshear** becomes the left guard, with journeyman **Leo Goeas** taking over at right guard and **Orlando Brown** at right tackle. Ogden, Brown, and Blakeshear are all over 320 pounds.

There is plenty of opportunity on the defensive line. The Ravens gave up on tackle **Dan Footman** and they have been trying to replace journeyman **Tim Goad**. Ends **Anthony Pleasant** and **Rob Burnett** were hurt last year. The coaches like **Larry Webster**, but he's returning from a drug suspension.

Prospects for Improvement

There's help on the defensive horizon. The Ravens may have arranged an instant pass rush within 10 days in late April by signing **Mike McCrary** of Seattle, drafting Florida State's **Peter Boulware**, and beating several other teams to Indianapolis free agent **Tony Siragusa**. McCrary tied Buffalo's **Bruce Smith** for the AFC sack lead (13.5). He virtually came out of nowhere midway through last season after three years of obscurity. The Ravens are gambling that he isn't a one-year won-

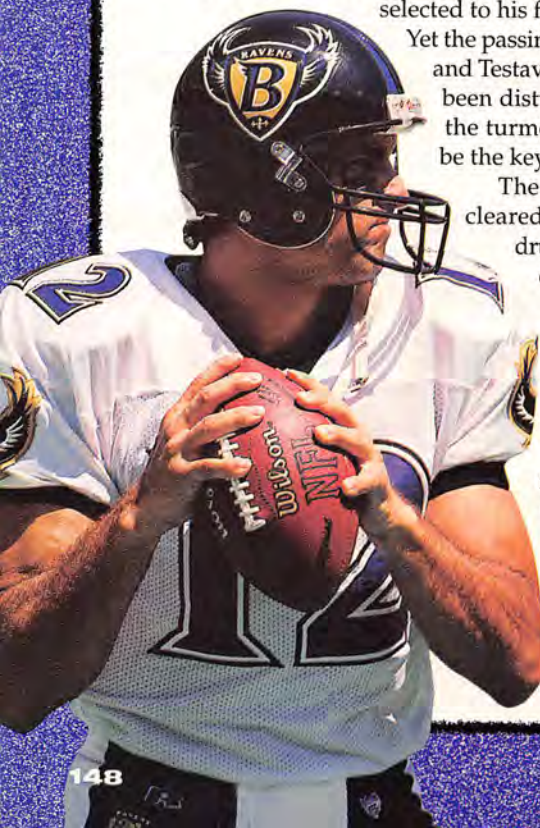
the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	357.7	3
Passing	248.6	2
Rushing	109.1	14
Scoring	23.2	6
Punting	43.2	T12
Punt Returns	9.4	T18
Kick Returns	20.2	26
Total Defense	368.1	30
Against Pass	248.1	30
Against Run	120	23
Points Allowed	27.6	28
Interceptions	15	20
Sacks	30	T25



Baltimore's deep threat, Michael Jackson (above).



the key stats

The Ravens set a league mark with three two-point conversions vs. New England on October 6. They were last in the NFL in total defense, pass defense, and fumble recoveries (seven). **Bam Morris** led the team in rushing (737 yards) and **Michael Jackson** led in receptions (76). **Michael McCrary** tied for the AFC lead with 13.5 sacks.

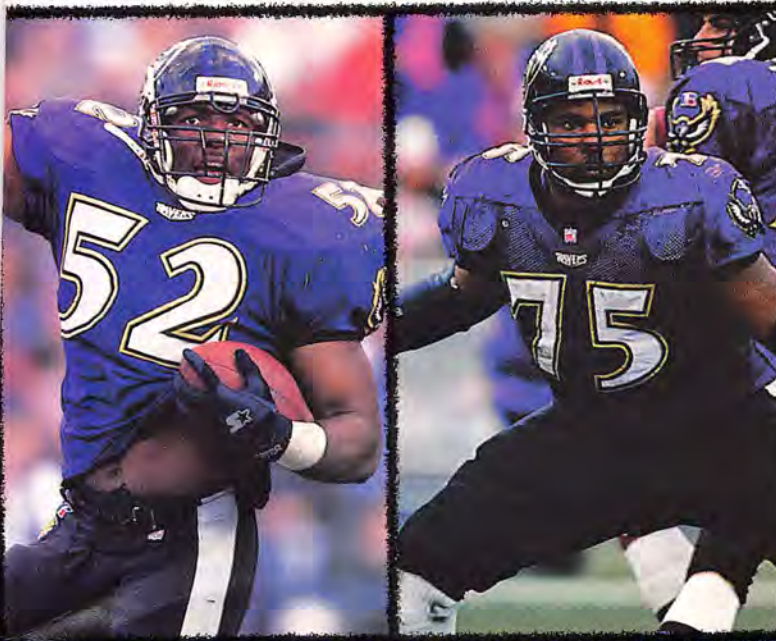
der. Boulware was a down lineman in college, but the Ravens will use him as their outside linebacker on the strong side, a demanding assignment, especially for a rookie. As for Siragusa, not only is he one of the league's better tackles against the run, but he will free McCrary and Boulware by occupying blockers.

Virginia linebacker **Jamie Sharper**, Penn State cornerback **Kim Herring**, and Louisville linebacker **Tyrus McCloud**, all rookies, should help. Sharper and Herring, in fact, have a chance to start. **Ray Lewis**, who did sterling work at middle linebacker as a rookie last season, is another defender who should benefit by the protection he'll get from Siragusa. Sharper could work his way into the lineup by late in the season. **Mike Croel** and **Mike Caldwell** are the uneasy incumbents at outside linebacker.

If second-year corner **Deron Jenkins** is helped by the new pass rush, he could team with veteran **Antonio Langham** to make this one of the Ravens' strongest defensive positions. With **Eric Turner** gone to Oakland, **Donny Brady** moves from corner to free safety. **Stevon Moore** and **Rondell Jones** occupy strong safety.

Lewis averaged 9.4 yards per punt return and 21.5 yards on kickoff returns as a rookie. He is capable of improving on those numbers. **Matt Stover**, who hit 13 of 14 field-goal attempts inside 39 yards and 19 of 25 overall, and punter **Greg Montgomery** (43.8-yard average) stabilize the kicking game. The Ravens recovered just seven fumbles and were next to last in the conference in turnover differential (-11).

Ray Lewis (at left, below) and **Jonathan Ogden** (at right, below) made immediate impacts for Baltimore as rookies last season.



BALTIMORE RAVENS

Ted Marchibroda, Head Coach

Kirk Ferentz, Assistant Head Coach/Offense; Marvin Lewis, Defensive Coordinator; Maxie Baughan, Linebackers; Jacob Burney, Defensive Line; Al Lavan, Running Backs; Richard Mann, Wide Receivers; Alvin Reynolds, Defensive Backs; Jerry Simmons, Strength and Conditioning; Don Strock, Quarterbacks; Ken Whisenand, Tight Ends; Lester Erb, Quality Control/Special Teams; Jim Schwartz, Quality Control/Defense

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
6	Otis, Scott	QB	6-5	230	9/28/72	1	Glenville State
12	Testaverde, Vinny	QB	6-5	227	11/13/63	10	Miami
10	Zeier, Eric	QB	6-1	205	9/6/72	2	Georgia
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
70	Arvie, Herman	G	6-4	305	10/12/70	4	Grambling
77	Brown, Orlando	T	6-7	340	11/12/70	3	South Carolina State
79	Goeas, Leo	G	6-4	300	8/15/66	7	Hawaii
64	Isaia, Sale	G	6-5	315	6/13/72	2	UCLA
67	Neujahr, Quentin	C	6-4	285	1/30/71	2	Kansas State
75	Ogden, Jonathan	G	6-8	320	7/31/74	1	UCLA
63	Williams, Wally	C	6-2	305	02/19/71	4	Florida A&M
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Byner, Earnest	RB	5-10	215	9/15/62	13	East Carolina
33	Morris, Bam	RB	6-1	246	1/13/72	3	Texas Tech
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
82	Alexander, Derrick	WR	6-2	195	11/6/71	3	Michigan
85	Ethridge, Ray	WR	5-10	180	12/12/68	2	Pasadena City College
88	Kinchen, Brian	TE	6-2	240	8/6/65	9	Louisiana State
84	Lewis, Jermaine	WR	5-7	172	10/16/74	1	Maryland
83	Roe, James	WR	6-2	185	8/23/74	1	Norfolk State
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
90	Burnett, Rob	DE	6-4	280	8/27/67	7	Syracuse
78	Footman, Dan	DT	6-5	290	1/13/69	4	Florida State
94	Frederick, Mike	DE	6-5	280	8/6/72	2	Virginia
73	Goad, Tim	DT	6-3	280	2/28/66	9	North Carolina
97	Jones, James	DT	6-2	290	2/6/69	6	Northern Iowa
99	McCrary, Michael	DE	6-4	267	7/7/70	4	Wake Forest
98	Siragusa, Tony	DT	6-3	320	5/14/67	7	Pittsburgh
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
36	Booth, Isaac	CB	6-3	190	5/23/71	3	California
24	Brady, Donny	CB	6-2	195	11/24/73	2	Wisconsin
42	Brew, Dorian	CB	5-10	182	07/19/74	1	Kansas
25	Jenkins, DeRon	CB	5-11	185	11/14/73	1	Tennessee
31	Jones, Rondell	S	6-2	210	5/7/71	4	North Carolina
38	Langham, Antonio	CB	6-1	180	7/31/72	3	Alabama
27	Moore, Stevon	S	5-11	210	2/9/67	7	Mississippi
37	Thompson, Bennie	S	6-1	214	2/10/63	8	Grambling
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
52	Lewis, Ray	LB	6-1	235	5/15/75	1	Miami
59	Powell, Craig	LB	6-4	235	11/13/71	2	Ohio State
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	McLaughlin, Steve	K	6-1	167	10/2/71	2	Arizona
9	Montgomery, Greg	P	6-4	215	10/29/64	9	Michigan State
3	Stover, Matt	K	5-11	178	1/27/68	6	Louisiana Tech
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
43	Adams, Vashone*	S	5-10	196	9/12/73	2	Eastern Michigan
23	Baldwin, Randy*	RB	5-10	216	8/19/67	6	Mississippi
56	Caldwell, Mike*	LB	6-2	235	8/31/71	4	Middle Tennessee St.
55	Clark, Sedric*	LB	6-2	245	1/28/73	1	Tulsa
51	Croel, Mike*	LB	6-3	240	6/6/69	6	Nebraska
53	Daniels, Dexter*	LB	6-1	241	12/8/73	1	Florida
36	Dowden, Corey*	CB	5-11	190	7/7/71	2	Tulane
91	Fortune, Elliott*	DT	6-4	275	5/28/74	2	Georgia Tech
50	Goganious, Keith*	LB	6-3	245	12/7/68	5	Penn State
86	Green, Eric*	TE	6-5	285	6/22/67	7	Liberty
48	Hartley, Frank*	TE	6-2	268	12/15/67	3	Illinois
81	Jackson, Michael*	WR	6-4	195	4/12/69	6	Southern Mississippi
98	Pleasant, Anthony*	DE	6-5	280	1/27/68	7	Tennessee State
87	Turner, Floyd*	WR	5-11	199	5/29/66	8	Northwest Louisiana
57	Williams, Jerrol*	LB	6-4	245	7/5/67	7	Purdue

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	4	Peter Boulware	DE	6-4	255	Florida State
2	34	Jamie Sharper	LB	6-3	240	Virginia
2	58	Kim Herring	DB	5-11	210	Penn State
3	64	Jay Graham	RB	5-11	220	Tennessee
4	118	Tyrus McCloud	LB	6-1	250	Louisville
5	134	Jeff Mitchell	C	6-4	300	Florida
6	167	Steve Lee	RB	6-0	265	Indiana
6	194	Cornell Brown	LB	6-0	240	Virginia Tech
7	205	Chris Ward	DE	6-3	275	Kentucky
7	234	Wally Richardson	QB	6-4	225	Penn State
7	236	Ralph Staten	LB	6-3	205	Alabama
7	238	Leland Taylor	DT	6-3	305	Louisville

The Broncos will make sure there are no stops this year on their way to the Super Bowl.

by Larry Felser Buffalo News

Predicted order of finish



* wild card

The Denver Broncos were 12-1 when they clinched everything clinchable in the AFC last December, and then they lost their focus. What they have to do now is pay attention. With quarterback John Elway at age 37, they may not get another chance.

Denver Broncos

Still gnashing their teeth over the way their best-laid plans went into the dumper last January, the Broncos did all the right things during the off-season. Concerned that left tackle Gary Zimmerman might retire, they traded a second-round pick to Baltimore for Tony Jones. They signed hard-blocking fullback Howard Griffith of Carolina to give added protection to Elway. Then they signed another good receiver, Willie Green, of the Panthers. In April, they signed free-agent defensive end Neil Smith.

Seattle Seahawks*

The Seahawks became aggressive in the free-agent market, and that may be what puts them back in the playoffs for the first time since 1988. Chad Brown, Pittsburgh's Pro Bowl linebacker (13 sacks), joins the pass rush. Willie Williams, who led the AFC in interceptions as a Steeler in '95, will be a starting cornerback.

Now that John Friesz is the undisputed leader at quarterback, he has to get more out of sensational wide receiver Joey Galloway. If there is stability in the offensive line, the Seahawks may get more than the 1,535 rushing yards that Chis Warren and Lamar Smith provided.

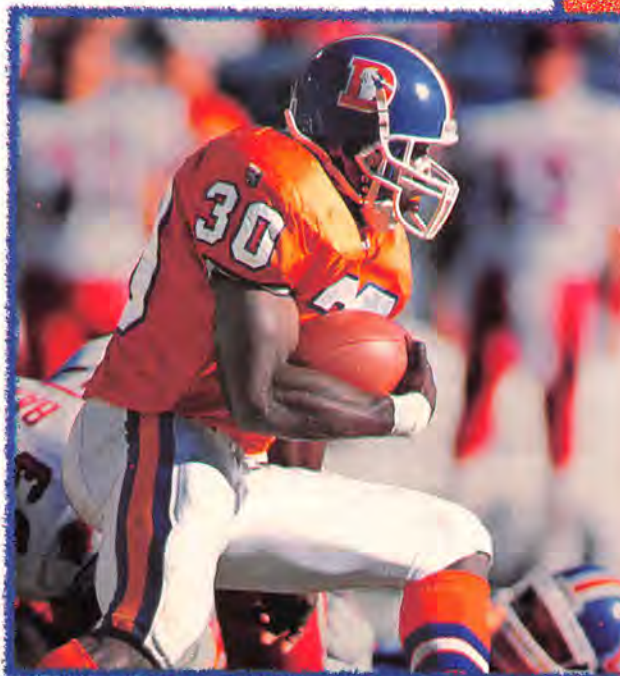
Oakland Raiders

The division dark horse is Oakland thanks to Jeff George. If the temperamental quarterback has finally matured, a development on which owner Al Davis gambled, the Raiders could become more than just a caricature of their former selves. George has the arm to reactivate the vertical passing game Davis loves so dearly.

In eight of the Raiders' nine losses, the margin of defeat was seven points or less. Davis also gambled that Desmond Howard, the Super Bowl MVP, can be the difference as kick returner or receiver in at least a couple of the close games this year.

Kansas City Chiefs

Kansas City bore the appearance of a team that grew old in last year's stretch run. The "help-want-



Terrell Davis (above) has the Broncos on the run.

ed" sign is out all over the roster. There was the usual reflex action at quarterback, with the Chiefs reaching out for another ex-49er. This time it's Elvis Grbac, who had a few good moments and some mediocre ones in relief of Steve Young.

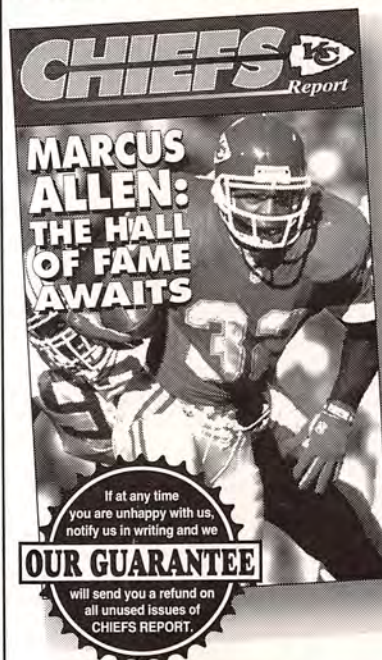
The Chiefs spent the money to re-sign linebacker Derrick Thomas, who had 13 sacks last year, but bade good-bye to pass rusher Neil Smith. The key offensive player will be running back Greg Hill, who began to realize his potential late last season.

San Diego Chargers

Since they advanced to Super Bowl XXIX, the Chargers are merely 17-17, and they look every bit of it. Bobby Ross, who coached the Super Bowl team, is now in Detroit, and many of the best players are scattered throughout the NFL. San Diego's best hope is that there will be a better relationship between new coach Kevin Gilbride and GM Bobby Beathard.

The Chargers have some stars—wide receiver Tony Martin, linebacker Junior Seau, strong safety Rodney Harrison, and free-agent defensive end William Fuller—but not enough of them. Their running game hasn't recovered from the disposal of Natrone Means, and the signing of Baltimore's Carwell Gardner isn't likely to ease the pain.

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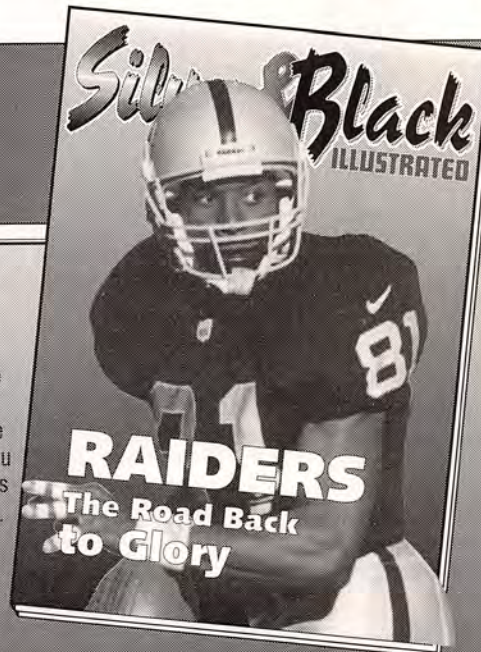
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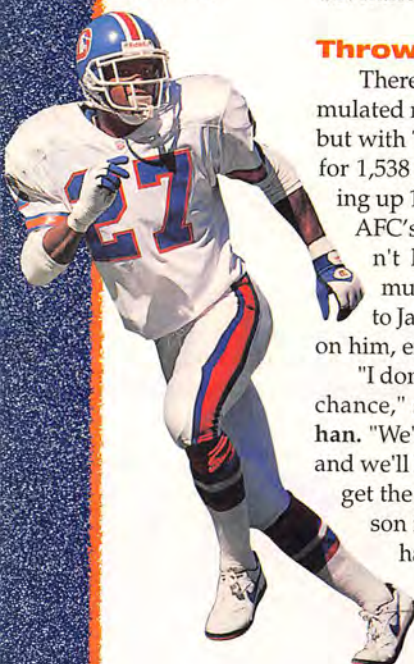
S&S97

DENVER BRONCOS



Despite the free-agent signings within the AFC West, Denver has the most balanced offense.

Steve Atwater (below) leads Denver's secondary.



Will the Broncos get a second chance? That depends on whether John Elway can still play quarterback as if he were five years younger. If his body reacts like that of most 37-year-old quarterbacks, then 1996, with its frustrating finale, will have been Denver's last hurrah. As Elway goes, so go the Broncos.

Thrown for a Loss

There were four AFC quarterbacks who accumulated more passing yards than Elway last year, but with Terrell Davis carrying the ball 345 times for 1,538 yards, both conference highs, and picking up 108 first downs, Elway, the AFC's most efficient passer, didn't have to throw nearly as much. The galling playoff loss to Jacksonville can't be blamed on him, either.

"I don't believe that was his last chance," said coach Mike Shanahan. "We'll come back in full force, and we'll have the same goals. We'll get the job done." In his first season in Denver in 1995, Shanahan compiled an 8-8 record.

Then he blazed through the '96 regular season, blowing away just about every opponent before the Broncos fell on their noses against Jacksonville in the playoffs.

On Balance

Denver still has great promise. Even with all the free-agent signings within the AFC West, the Broncos have the most balanced offense. They led the NFL in four categories: rushing yards, combined yards gained, third-down efficiency, and average time of possession.

The offense was tinkered with during the off-season to make it more potent. Tired of waiting for

expensive ex-Charger Anthony Miller (56 receptions) to recapture his prime, the Broncos signed Willie Greene (46 receptions) of Carolina. He won't be nearly as spectacular as Miller, but he'll be valued for his dependability. Another ex-Panther, full-back Howard Griffith, was signed to give Elway improved protection.

Ed McCaffrey isn't going to burn anyone deep, but he runs dependable routes and had seven touchdowns among his 48 catches. He'll be complemented by Greene and Rod Smith. The most welcome signing was one of Denver's own, tight end Shannon Sharpe, whose 80 catches included 10 for touchdowns. Dwayne Carswell is the blocking tight end.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	361.9	1
Passing	214.3	13
Rushing	147.6	1
Scoring	24.4	4
Punting	41.8	23
Punt Returns	11.9	4
Kick Returns	23.9	T5
Total Defense	279.4	4
Against Pass	196.2	10
Against Run	83.2	1
Points Allowed	17.2	7
Interceptions	23	T4
Sacks	40	T8

The Line on the Broncos

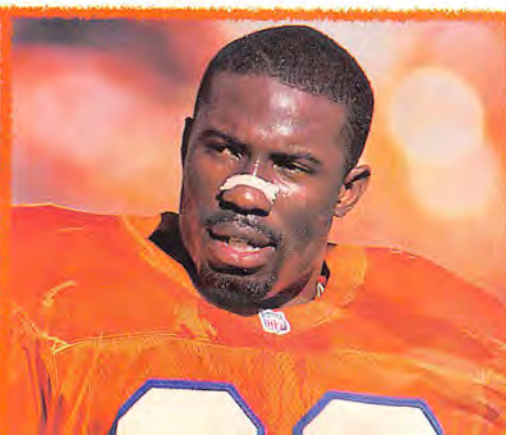
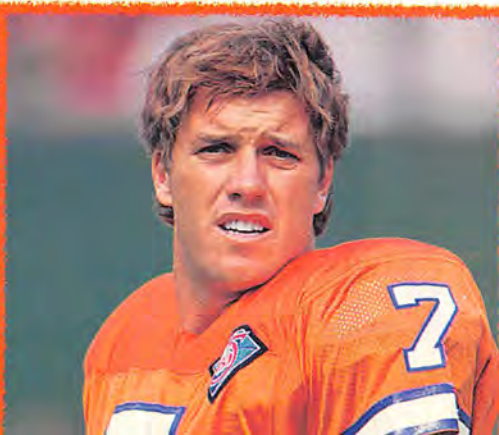
Anticipating the retirement of Pro Bowl left tackle Gary Zimmerman, Denver traded with Baltimore to acquire Tony Jones. The quality of the line drops off with the departure of Zimmerman. Left guard Mark Schlereth underwent his 16th knee surgery. Center Tom Nalen and right guard Brian Habib are solid. Journeyman right tackle Broderick Thompson will be challenged

by Harry Swayne, the battered ex-Charger, and Jamie Brown. The Broncos used one of their three draft choices for guard/center Dan Neil of the University of Texas.

More Sack Time

On defense Shanahan hopes Alfred Williams has another year like the one he had last season. But Shanahan also hopes that free agent Neil Smith does not repeat his sub-par performance of '96. Kansas City gave up on Smith, who has been one of the great pass rushers of the '90s, after he

The Broncos' balanced offense (below, left to right): Shannon Sharpe, John Elway, and Terrell Davis.



the key stats

The Broncos were first in the NFL in rushing offense and rushing defense. **Neil Smith** has 86 career sacks. **John Elway**, the AFC's top-rated quarterback in '96, needs 1,970 passing yards to pass Fran Tarkenton (47,003) for second place in the NFL record book. **Terrell Davis** led the AFC with 1,848 yards from scrimmage.



Wide receiver Ed McCaffrey (at right, above) is a reliable target.

slumped to six sacks. Shanahan thinks he'll get more out of Smith than he got out of **Dan Williams**. Williams, Denver's right end, had 13 sacks. The top draft pick, Clemson's **Trevor Pryce**, will get a chance to start at left tackle alongside **Michael Dean Perry**.

John Mobley is a rare physical talent at weakside linebacker, but his small-college background led to a lot of rookie errors. If Mobley doesn't improve markedly in pass coverage, then Shanahan may use free agent **Godfrey Myles**. **Allen Aldridge** returns at middle linebacker and **Bill Romanowski**, who had a superior season, returns at strongside linebacker. Strong safety **Tyrone Braxton** led the AFC with nine interceptions and **Steve Atwater**, who has lost some speed, is still the leader at free safety. **Ray Crockett** had one of his better seasons at left corner. The right side is a jumble, with **Tory James** and **Darius Johnson** competing for a starting position.

Playing for Time

Age is a problem in the secondary. It's vital that either James or Johnson—but preferably both—is able to contribute this season. Braxton is 33 and Atwater 31, so rookie **Corey Gilliard** of Ball State will provide needed depth at safety. The Broncos had their fewest draft choices in history, three, so it's important that Gilliard be ready to play immediately.

The best news on the special teams was the signing of ex-Charger **Darrien Gordon**, who led the AFC with a 14.9-yard punt-return average. He could get into the cornerback derby, too. Eleven AFC kickers had a better field-goal percentage than **Jason Elam**. He led the team in scoring (109 points) but hit just seven of 13 attempts beyond the 40, even in that thin Colorado air. **Tom Rouen** finished 11th in the AFC in punting. **Vaughn Hebron**'s 24.4-yard average on kickoff returns helped give the Broncos favorable field position.

DENVER BRONCOS

Mike Shanahan, Head Coach

Alex Gibbs, Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Line; Greg Robinson, Defensive Coordinator; Gary Kubiak, Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks; Frank Bush, Linebackers; Rich Tuten, Strength and Conditioning; Barney Chavous, Assistant Offensive Line/Assistant Strength & Conditioning; Rick Dennison, Special Teams; Ed Donatelli, Defensive Backs; George Dyer, Defensive Line; Mike Heimerdinger, Wide Receivers; Brian Pariani, Tight Ends; Ricky Porter, Offensive Assistant; Greg Saporta, Assistant Strength & Conditioning; Rick Smith, Defensive Assistant; John Teerlinck, Pass Rush Specialist; Bobby Turner, Running Backs

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
6	Buster, Bobby	QB	6-3	207	8/15/62	11 Northeast Louisiana
7	Elway, John	QB	6-3	215	6/28/60	14 Stanford
8	Lewis, Jeff	QB	6-2	215	4/17/73	1 Northern Arizona

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
71	Adams, Scott	T	6-6	315	9/28/66	5 Georgia
63	Alex, Keith	G	6-4	307	6/9/69	4 Texas A&M
60	Banks, Chris	G	6-1	286	4/4/73	1 Kansas
70	Brown, Jamie	T	6-8	320	4/24/72	2 Florida A&M
63	Diaz-Infante, David	G	6-3	292	3/31/64	10 San Jose State
75	Habib, Brian	G	6-7	299	12/2/64	8 Washington
62	Jones, John	G	6-1	309	12/8/72	1 Kansas
66	Jones, Tony	T	6-5	295	5/24/66	9 Western Carolina
66	Nalen, Tom	C	6-3	280	5/13/71	3 Boston College
64	Nutten, Tom	G	6-4	295	6/8/71	2 Western Michigan
69	Schlereth, Mark	G	6-3	278	1/25/66	8 Idaho
72	Swayne, Harry	T	6-5	295	2/2/65	10 Rutgers

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
26	Burkett, Jeremy	RB	6-1	215	4/15/73	1 Colorado State
30	Davis, Terrell	RB	5-11	200	10/28/72	2 Georgia
30	Griffith, Howard	RB	6-1	240	11/17/67	4 Illinois
22	Hebron, Vaughn	RB	5-8	195	10/7/70	4 Virginia Tech
29	Lynn, Anthony	RB	6-3	230	12/21/68	4 Texas Tech
42	Smith, Detron	RB	5-10	234	2/25/74	1 Texas A&M
24	Willis, Jamal	RB	6-2	218	12/12/72	2 Brigham Young

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
89	Carswell, Dwayne	TE	6-3	261	1/18/72	3 Liberty
86	Chamberlain, Byron	TE	6-1	240	10/17/71	2 Wayne State (NE)
15	Gamble, David	WR	6-1	190	6/14/71	1 New Hampshire
86	Green, Willie	WR	6-4	188	4/2/66	6 Mississippi
82	Jeffers, Patrick	WR	6-3	217	2/2/73	1 Virginia
87	McCaffrey, Ed	WR	6-5	215	8/17/68	6 Stanford
83	Miller, Anthony	WR	5-11	190	4/15/65	9 Tennessee
84	Sharpe, Shannon	TE	6-2	230	6/26/68	7 Savannah State
80	Smith, Rod	WR	6-1	190	5/15/70	2 Missouri Southern

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
98	Barber, Kurt	DE	6-4	260	1/5/69	5 Southern California
67	Campbell, Mark	DE	6-1	290	9/12/72	1 Florida
79	Geathers, Jumpy	DT	6-7	290	6/26/60	13 Wichita State
96	Hasselbach, Harald	DE	6-6	280	9/22/67	3 Washington
72	Jones, Ernest	DT	6-2	255	4/1/71	2 Oregon
95	Perry, Michael Dean	DT	6-1	290	8/27/65	9 Clemson
90	Smith, Neil	DE	6-4	273	4/10/66	9 Nebraska
98	Tanuvasa, Maa	DT	6-2	277	11/6/70	2 Hawaii
94	Traylor, Keith	DE	6-2	315	9/3/69	6 Central Oklahoma
91	Williams, Alfred	DE	6-6	265	11/6/68	6 Colorado
90	Williams, Dan	DT	6-4	290	12/15/69	4 Toledo

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
27	Atwater, Steve	S	6-3	217	10/28/66	8 Arkansas
34	Braxton, Tyrone	S	5-11	185	12/17/64	10 North Dakota State
39	Crockett, Ray	CB	5-10	185	1/5/67	8 Baylor
33	Dodge, Dedrick	S	6-2	184	6/14/67	6 Florida State
21	Gordon, Darrien	CB	5-11	182	11/14/70	4 Stanford
21	Hilliard, Randy	CB	5-11	170	2/6/67	7 Northwestern Louisiana
20	James, Tory	CB	6-2	188	5/18/73	1 Louisiana State
25	Johnson, Darrius	CB	5-9	175	9/17/72	1 Oklahoma
43	Joseph, Vance	CB	6-1	202	9/20/72	2 Colorado

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
57	Aldridge, Allen	LB	6-1	245	5/30/72	3 Houston
57	Ale, Arnold	LB	6-3	245	6/17/70	3 UCLA
55	Brown, Ken	LB	6-1	235	5/5/71	2 Virginia Tech
59	Cadrez, Glenn	LB	6-3	245	1/2/70	5 Houston
96	Carter, Bernard	LB	6-3	238	8/22/71	2 East Carolina
97	Dragoo, Justin	LB	6-3	240	1/30/72	1 Arizona State
51	Mobley, John	LB	6-1	230	10/10/73	1 Kutztown
98	Myles, Godfrey	LB	6-1	240	9/22/68	6 Florida
53	Romanowski, Bill	LB	6-4	241	4/2/66	9 Boston College

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	Baker, Jon	K	6-1	185	8/13/72	2 Arizona State
1	Elam, Jason	K	5-11	192	3/8/70	4 Hawaii
16	Rouen, Tom	P	6-3	215	6/9/68	4 Colorado

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP	COLLEGE
56	Burns, Keith	LB	6-1	240	5/16/72	3	Oklahoma State
37	Hauck, Tim*	S	5-10	185	12/20/66	7	Montana
97	Lodish, Mike*	DT	6-3	280	8/11/67	7	UCLA
68	McElroy, Reggie*	T	6-6	290	3/4/60	13	West Texas
14	Musgrave, Bill*	QB	6-3	215	11/11/67	6	Oregon
38	Rivers, Reggie*	RB	6-1	215	2/22/68	6	Southwest Texas State
11	Rubley, T.J.*	QB	6-2	212	11/29/68	5	Tulsa
64	Tamm, Ralph*	G	6-4	280	3/11/66	9	West Chester
65	Zimmerman, Gary*	T	6-6	294	12/13/61	11	Oregon

*Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	28	Trevor Pryce	DT	6-5	285	Clemson
3	67	Dan Neil	C	6-2	291	Texas
4	124	Cory Gilliard	DB	6-0	210	Ball State

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS



Seattle had the best draft in the NFL, acquiring future stars at cornerback and left tackle.

Free agent Chad Brown (below) had 13 sacks last season for the Steelers.



Perennial Pro Bowl defensive tackle Cortez Kennedy (below).

No team in the AFC positioned itself more efficiently for a playoff run than the Seahawks. They stabilized their quarterbacking, filed the teeth of their pass rush down to sharp points, and acquired two new starting cornerbacks. They won two of their last three games in December, so look for some carry-over this fall.

The Seahawks also maneuvered themselves into the best draft in the NFL. How often does a team acquire future superstars at two of the most important positions: left cornerback and left tackle? That's what Seattle did in drafting **Shawn Springs** of Ohio State and **Walter Jones** of Florida State.

Warming to Friesz

No longer are the Seahawks exasperated over waiting for Rick Mirer, their long-time quarterback project, to mature. Coach **Dennis Erickson** traded Mirer to Chicago for the Bears No. 1 pick in the '96 draft, put the offense in the hands of journeyman **John Friesz**, and signed **Warren Moon** as an insurance policy. That should at least past .500.

This is Friesz's third NFL team since 1993. The only time he's been a start-to-finish starting quarterback was in 1991 with the Chargers. Friesz has had some great moments and some lengthy periods of success in his seven pro seasons. He's also had a bunch of injuries, the latest of which was a broken leg suffered last season after he led Seattle on a 4-2 run.

At age 30, he won't suddenly turn into Dan Marino, but his experience and background may be what this team needs to get back to the playoffs for the first time since the days of coach Chuck Knox, quarterback Dave Krieg, and running back Curt Warner in the late 1980s.

Running Time

If that happens, it could stabilize a franchise that actually moved, if only for one week, to Southern California, last year. The Seahawks need some success to establish their identity in Seattle once again.

Even in a sub-par year for **Chris Warren**, Seattle finished as the fifth-ranked rushing team in the NFL. Warren ran for 855 yards, about 400 yards off his usual output, but **Lamar Smith** added 680 and eight touchdowns. Warren averaged 4.2 yards per carry and Smith averaged 4.4. Instability on the offensive line and injuries limited Warren, but so did his own inconsistencies. Fullback **Mack Strong**, basically a blocker a year ago, carried the ball just 14 times, a total that should increase in 1997.

Another Dimension

Joey Galloway had a slight drop-off from his rookie season, catching 57 passes, but this could be a breakout year for one of the speediest receivers in the NFL. Erickson will use him out of the slot, something that may produce coverage mismatches. **Brian Blades**, distracted by off-the-field troubles, caught 57 passes, 35 under his average for the previous three seasons. **Mike Pritchard** gives Friesz added dimension in the passing game. Tight end **Christian Fauria** needs to stay healthy, but his reckless style may prevent that. **Carlester Crumpler** is the backup.

Changes in Line

Howard Mudd, one of the most reputable offensive line coaches in the game, is charged with bringing consistency and stability to a unit that has made at least one change per season for the last nine years. Free-agent comings and goings, misguided talent judgments, and tinkering caused most of the problems.

Jones, who played only one season of Division I-A college football, may take time before he's polished, but Erickson is willing to suffer through the

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	314.0	19
Passing	189.2	24
Rushing	124.8	5
Scoring	19.8	T16
Punting	43.6	11
Punt Returns	10.4	11
Kick Returns	21.7	17
Total Defense	339.8	24
Against Pass	208.7	17
Against Run	131.1	28
Points Allowed	23.5	T24
Interceptions	14	T21
Sacks	48	T3

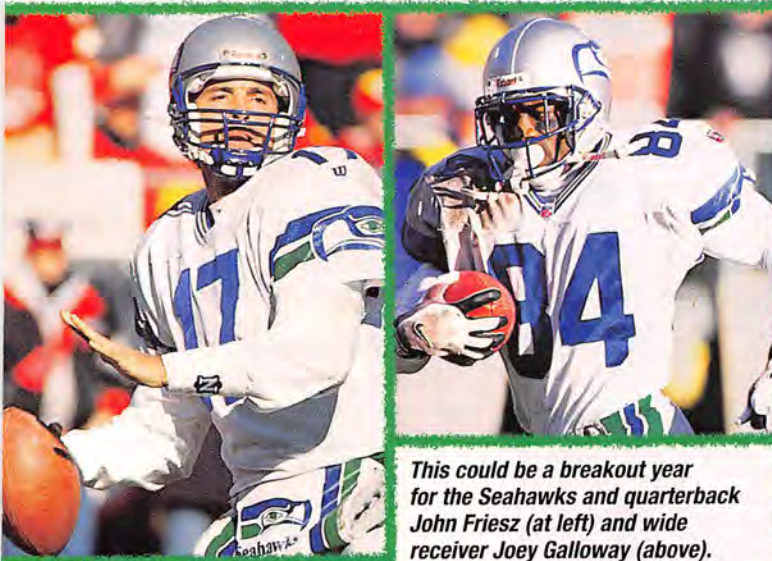


the key stats

Todd Peterson set team single-season highs for points (111) and field goals (28). **Cortez Kennedy** made his sixth straight appearance in the Pro Bowl and set a Seahawks' record with 96 consecutive starts. Free-agent safety **Bennie Blades** had a pair of interceptions last season for the Lions, including one for a 98-yard touchdown.

development. Jones's presence should push incumbent left tackle **James Atkins** over to the right side, where he could challenge **Howard Ballard**. **Derrick Graham** is the right guard. At left guard is last year's No. 1, **Pete Kendall**. The running game should improve, while the protection for Friesz is likely to be more reliable.

Of the Seahawks' 48 sacks last year, 40 were made by the front four, the best mark in the NFL. Mike McCrary jumped



This could be a breakout year for the Seahawks and quarterback John Friesz (at left) and wide receiver Joey Galloway (above).

to the Ravens, but Seattle signed Pittsburgh's blitzing Pro Bowl linebacker, **Chad Brown**, whose 13 sacks were second in the AFC to McCrary's 13.5. **Michael Sinclair**, the left end, also had 13 sacks, right tackle **Cortez Kennedy** had eight, and left tackle **Sam Adams** added 5.5. **Antonio Edwards**, the starter before McCrary came on so unexpectedly when Edwards was injured last year, will reclaim his old job at right end. He was the team's co-leader in sacks in 1995.

Playing Deep

Brown will play weakside linebacker, with **Winston Moss** moving to the strong side to replace the departed Terry Wooden. **Dean Wells** returns as middle linebacker. Springs will start at left corner, with ex-Steeler **Willie Williams** as the new right corner. Safety is perhaps the deepest position on the team. **Darryl Williams**, the ex-Bengal, led the team with five interceptions. **Robert Blackmon** is the incumbent strong safety, but free agent **Bennie Blades**, the long-time Detroit star and the brother of Brian, may have something to say about that.

Todd Peterson set club records for field goals, 28, and points, 111. **Rick Tuten** remains one of the NFL's top punters. Galloway and **Ronnie Harris** each averaged over 10 yards per punt return, but the coverage unit needs improvement.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Dennis Erickson, Head Coach

Gregg Smith, Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Line; Bob Bratkowski, Offensive Coordinator/Wide Receivers; Greg McMackin, Defensive Coordinator; Dave Arnold, Special Teams; Tommy Brasher, Defensive Line; Dave Brown, Defensive Coach; Keith Gilbertson, Tight Ends; Ned James, Defensive Staff Assistant; Dana LeDuc, Strength and Conditioning; Darren Krein, Assistant Strength and Conditioning; Howard Mudd, Offensive Line; Mike Murphy, Linebackers; Rich Olson, Quarterbacks; Willy Robinson, Defensive Backs; Clarence Shelton, Running Backs

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
17	Friesz, John	QB	6-4	211	05/19/67	7	Idaho	
1	Moon, Warren	QB	6-3	213	11/18/56	13	Washington	
13	Torretta, Gino	QB	6-2	215	8/10/70	4	Miami	
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
74	Atkins, James	T	6-6	303	1/28/70	3	Southwestern Louisiana	
75	Ballard, Howard	T	6-6	325	11/3/63	9	Alabama A&M	
64	Barr, Robert	T	6-4	307	6/7/73	1	Rutgers	
63	Beebe, Frank	C	6-4	292	5/1/73	1	Panhandle State	
77	Graham, Derrick	T	6-4	314	3/18/67	7	Appalachian State	
68	Greene, Andrew	G	6-3	304	9/24/69	2	Indiana	
66	Kendall, Pete	G	6-5	292	7/9/73	1	Boston College	
52	Mawae, Kevin	G	6-4	293	1/23/71	3	Louisiana State	
69	Williams, Grant	T	6-7	323	5/10/74	1	Louisiana Tech	
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
31	Broussard, Steve	RB	5-7	201	2/22/67	7	Washington State	
34	Brown, Reggie	RB	6-1	233	6/26/73	1	Fresno State	
32	Gray, Oscar	RB	6-1	255	9/25/72	2	Arkansas	
28	Innocent, Dou	RB	5-11	212	7/9/72	1	Mississippi	
38	Strong, Mack	RB	6-1	222	9/11/71	3	Georgia	
42	Warren, Chris	RB	6-2	226	1/24/67	7	Ferrum	
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
45	Bell, Coleman	TE	6-2	243	4/22/70	2	Miami	
89	Blades, Brian	WR	5-11	186	7/24/65	9	Miami	
87	Crumpler, Carlester	TE	6-6	260	9/5/71	3	East Carolina	
86	Fauria, Christian	TE	6-5	245	9/22/71	2	Colorado	
84	Galloway, Joey	WR	5-11	188	11/20/71	2	Ohio State	
81	Harris, Ronnie	WR	5-11	175	6/4/70	4	Oregon	
82	McKnight, James	WR	6-1	186	6/17/72	3	Liberty	
85	Pritchard, Mike	WR	5-11	186	10/26/69	6	Colorado	
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
98	Adams, Sam	DT	6-3	297	6/13/73	3	Texas A&M	
93	Daniels, Phillip	DE	6-5	263	6/26/73	1	Georgia	
94	Edwards, Antonio	DE	6-3	270	3/10/70	4	Valdosta State	
96	Kennedy, Cortez	DT	6-3	293	8/23/68	7	Miami	
67	LaBounty, Matt	DE	6-4	275	1/3/69	4	Oregon	
92	McMillian, Henry	DT	6-3	275	10/17/71	2	Florida	
78	Riley, Pat	DT	6-5	275	3/8/72	2	Miami	
70	Sinclair, Michael	DE	6-4	267	1/31/68	5	Eastern New Mexico	
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
20	Bellamy, Jay	S	5-11	193	7/8/72	3	Rutgers	
36	Blades, Bennie	S	6-1	221	9/3/66	9	Miami	
21	Cunningham, T.J.	S	6-1	191	10/24/72	1	Colorado	
24	Jones, Selwyn	CB	6-1	185	5/13/70	4	Colorado State	
29	Richardson, C.J.	S	5-10	209	6/10/72	2	Miami	
23	Seigler, Dexter	CB	5-9	178	1/11/72	1	Miami	
22	Thomas, Fred	CB	5-9	172	9/11/73	1	Tennessee-Martin	
33	Williams, Darryl	S	6-1	191	1/7/70	5	Miami	
27	Williams, Willie	CB	5-9	180	12/26/70	4	Western Carolina	
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
54	Barber, Michael	LB	6-1	252	11/9/71	2	Clemson	
94	Brown, Chad	LB	6-2	240	7/12/70	4	Colorado	
57	Kyle, Jason	LB	6-3	242	5/12/72	2	Arizona State	
56	Logan, James	LB	6-2	214	12/6/72	2	Baylor	
55	Moss, Winston	LB	6-3	245	12/24/65	10	Miami	
53	Unverzagt, Eric	LB	6-1	236	12/18/72	1	Wisconsin	
95	Wells, Dean	LB	6-3	244	7/20/70	4	Kentucky	
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE	
2	Peterson, Todd	K	5-10	180	2/4/70	3	Georgia	
14	Tuten, Rick	P	6-2	221	1/5/65	8	Florida State	
#	FREE AGENTS		POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
48	Benford, Clarence*	TE	6-3	249	8/18/73	1	Albany State	
25	Blackmon, Robert*	S	6-0	206	5/12/67	7	Baylor	
79	Cunningham, Ed*	C	6-3	285	8/17/69	5	Washington	
8	Gelbaugh, Stan*	QB	6-3	215	12/4/62	10	Maryland	
97	Montgomery, Glenn*	DT	6-0	290	3/31/67	8	Houston	
72	Nash, Joe *	DT	6-3	278	10/11/60	15	Boston College	
36	Smith, Lamar	RB	5-11	218	11/29/70	3	Houston	
59	Stowe, Tyrone*	LB	6-2	239	5/30/65	10	Rutgers	
83	Williams, Ronnie*	TE	6-3	258	1/19/66	5	Oklahoma State	

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	3	Shawn Springs	DB	6-0	195	Ohio State
1	6	Walter Jones	T	6-5	300	Florida State
5	142	Eric Stokes	S	5-11	200	Nebraska
6	147	Itula Mili	TE	6-4	265	Brigham Young
7	211	Carlos Jones	DB	5-10	180	Miami

OAKLAND RAIDERS



The Raiders led the NFL in penalties and missed the playoffs for the second straight year.



Hired Gun:
The Raiders' new
quarterback, Jeff
George (above).

It used to be that if you gave owner Al Davis your tired, your poor, the wretched refuse of your teeming roster, he would beat your brains out with them. That was a long time ago. In recent seasons, the refuse just got more wretched.

The word is discipline. The Raiders don't have it, but they need it desperately. In their next-to-last game they were penalized 20 times in a five-point loss to Denver. They led the NFL in penalties and missed the playoffs for the second straight season.

So they spent a fortune signing quarterback Jeff George, poster boy for lack of self-discipline. Joe Bugel, the new head coach, will need a magician's touch to repair the Raiders' tattered old "Pride and Poise" motto.

Throwing the Long Ball

With George, Davis is dreaming his sweet dreams about his vertical passing game again. He envisions George warming up his \$27.5 million passing arm and flinging the football far downfield to Tim Brown, James Jett, and maybe even free agent Desmond Howard, the Super Bowl MVP Davis overpaid to jump from Green Bay. The flip side is a nightmare, with George sucking his thumb, as he did in Indianapolis and Atlanta.

George was the sort of temptation Davis couldn't resist. No quarterback in the last four drafts—and not even Peyton Manning in the next draft—has an arm that can match George's. The Raiders looked past George's infamous sideline temper tantrum with ex-Falcons coach June Jones. Instead, they focused on the 47 touchdown passes George threw in his first two years with Atlanta.

Davis once picked Jim Plunkett off the quarterback trash heap, and the Raiders went to Super Bowl XVIII with him. Oak-

Chester McGlockton,
first line of defense.

land Al may live in the past, but George represents a chance, maybe his last, to bask in big-play glory once again.

Trouble on Line

Jeff Hostetler, George's predecessor, limped out of Oakland bruised by just about as many sacks as George was accustomed to suffering in Atlanta. Oakland's offensive line is stable in only two positions: center, with Barret Robbins, and left guard, with Steve Wisniewski. The referees are now conscious of the reputation Wisniewski has for unorthodox play, however, and his penalties are piling up. Right tackle Lincoln Kennedy is an Atlanta reject and left tackle Pat Harlow is bothered by a back problem. The draft brought guard Adam Treu of Nebraska and tackle Tim Kohn of Iowa State.

Run and Catch

Running back Napoleon Kaufman led the team with a 5.8-yard per-carry average and 874 yards, but his lack of size limited him to fewer than 10 carries a game. There is a committee behind him, with Joe Aska and Harvey Williams, who combined for 757 yards, and rookie

Chad Levitt of Cornell.

Tim Brown is still the primary receiver, in his 10th season at age 31. He caught 90 passes, including nine for touchdowns last season. Jett, a sometime contributor, had 43 catches and four touchdowns. Howard has never connected as a featured NFL receiver, but he'll get his chance in Oakland with George. Rickey Dudley's rookie year was notable for his dropped passes, but it would not be a surprise if he became a star as George's collaborator. He's huge, speedy, smart, and, unlike many of his veteran teammates, disciplined.

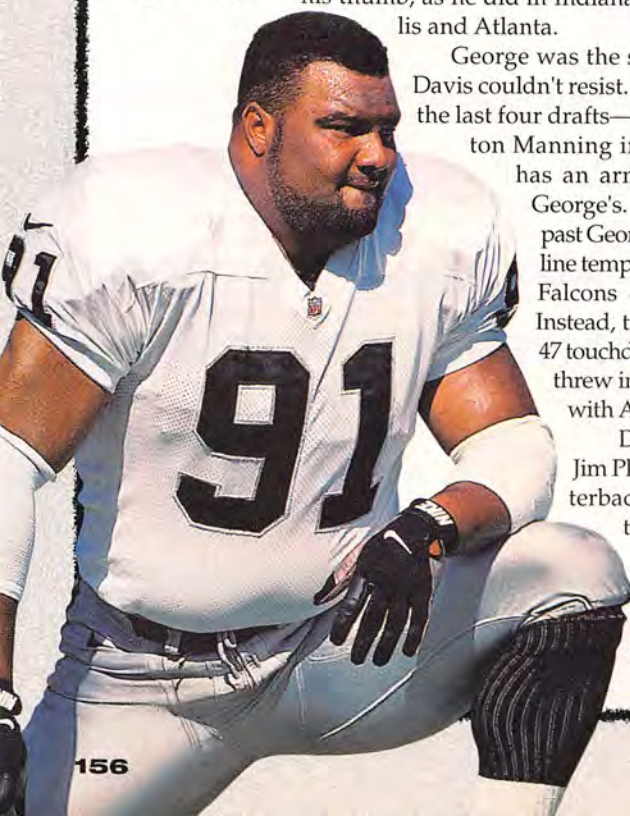
Pressure on the Line

The draft offered possibilities for major improvements on defense. Darrell Russell, the nimble tackle from USC, gives the Raiders another potential inside force on the line. With Russell lined up next to tackle Russell Maryland, the Raiders can move huge Chester McGlockton outside. Pat Swilling plays the pass-rush position on the other flank, but young Lance Johnstone could replace him.

the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	328.3	8
Passing	192.4	23
Rushing	135.9	3
Scoring	21.3	12
Punting	40.1	30
Punt Returns	9.6	T16
Kick Returns	20.9	24
Total Defense	293.6	8
Against Pass	188.8	15
Against Run	104.8	7
Points Allowed	18.3	T8
Interceptions	17	T16
Sacks	34	T17



the key stats

Napoleon Kaufman led the NFL in yards per carry (5.8) and Oakland averaged a league-high 4.8 yards per rush. But the Raiders had just seven rushing touchdowns in '96, and only the New York Giants, with four, had fewer. **Desmond Howard** led the NFL in punt returns, averaging 15.1 yards and scoring three touchdowns.

Oakland managed a mediocre 34 sacks. Seven AFC teams had more. The Raiders also finished near the bottom in take-aways. That helps explain why they won just one of nine games decided by a touchdown or less. How un-Raiderlike!

The reordered line will help. Last year the Raiders finished in the middle of the pack in defending against the run. A change is definitely necessary. The city of Oakland has been lukewarm about this prodigal team since its return from Los Angeles. The Raiders' fanatical following used to be a major edge. Now there is no certainty of a sellout in Oakland-Alameda County Stadium these days.

Oakland lost a linebacker it couldn't afford to lose when Mike Jones signed with St. Louis. **Rob Fredrickson** is a fixture at left outside linebacker and **Greg Biekert** is an underrated asset in the middle. **Mike Morton**, who replaced Fredrickson when he was hurt, moves into Jones's spot.

Safety First

Davis may have stolen a top safety when he signed **Eric Turner**, a one-time Pro Bowler who was cut by Baltimore in a salary-cap move. Turner is young and his toughness should upgrade the secondary. Strong safety **Lorenzo Lynch**, who was dropped to make room for George in a salary-cap move, was re-signed and reinstalled as a starter. Lynch is 34 and right cornerback **Albert Lewis** is 37. **Terry McDaniel**, the 32-year-old left corner, averaged 30 yards on his five interceptions.

Cole Ford finished well, making 12 of his last 14 field goals. Howard will improve the return game.

Tim Brown (below, left) and James Jett (below, right) hope to be on the receiving end of more deep passes this year for the Raiders.



OAKLAND RAIDERS

Joe Bugel, Head Coach

Ray Perkins, Offensive Coordinator; Fred Whittingham, Defensive Coordinator; Keith Rowen, Assistant Head Coach/Offense; Dave Adolph, Linebackers; Fred Biletnikoff, Quality Control/Offense; Bishop Harris, Running Backs; Willie Brown, Squad Development/Cornerbacks; Garrett Glemont, Strength and Conditioning; John Guy, Defensive Assistant; Bill Meyers, Tight Ends; Floyd Peters, Defensive Line; Steve Shafer, Defensive Backs; Kevin Spencer, Quality Control/Defense; Rusty Tillman, Special Teams; Mike Wilson, Wide Receivers

#	QUARTERBACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
1	George, Jeff	QB	6-4	215	12/8/67	7 Illinois
15	Hostetler, Jeff	QB	6-3	215	4/22/61	12 West Virginia
11	Klingler, David	QB	6-3	205	2/17/69	5 Houston
10	Montez, Alfred	QB	6-2	225	10/18/72	1 Western New Mexico

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
68	Cunningham, Rick	T	6-6	307	1/4/67	5 Texas A&M
75	Harlow, Pat	T	6-6	290	3/16/69	6 Southern California
64	Jenkins, Robert	T	6-5	295	12/30/63	10 UCLA
72	Kennedy, Lincoln	T	6-6	325	2/12/71	4 Washington
79	Kysar, Jeff	T	6-7	320	6/14/72	2 Arizona State
73	McRae, Charles	T	6-7	305	9/16/68	6 Tennessee
63	Robbins, Barret	C	6-3	305	8/26/73	2 Texas Christian
72	Villa, Danny	G	6-5	308	9/21/64	10 Arizona State
76	Wisniewski, Steve	G	6-4	295	4/7/67	8 Penn State

#	RUNNING BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
35	Aska, Joe	RB	5-10	240	7/14/72	2 Central Oklahoma
48	Davison, Jerone	RB	6-1	225	9/16/70	1 Arizona State
45	Hall, Tim	RB	5-11	220	2/15/74	1 Robert Morris
26	Kaufman, Napoleon	RB	5-9	180	6/7/73	2 Washington
22	Williams, Harvey	RB	6-2	220	4/22/68	6 Louisiana State

#	RECEIVERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
81	Brown, Tim	WR	6-1	195	7/22/66	9 Notre Dame
83	Dudley, Rickey	TE	6-6	245	7/15/72	1 Ohio State
81	Hervey, Edward	WR	6-3	189	5/4/73	2 Southern California
85	Hinton, Marcus	TE	6-4	260	12/27/71	2 Alcorn State
81	Howard, Desmond	WR	5-9	180	5/15/70	5 Michigan
82	Jett, James	WR	5-10	165	12/28/70	4 West Virginia
84	Shedd, Kenny	WR	5-10	170	2/14/71	4 Northern Iowa
88	Truitt, Olanda	WR	6-1	195	1/4/71	4 Mississippi State

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Bruce, Aundray	DE	6-5	265	4/30/66	9 Auburn
78	Faumui, Ta'ase	DE	6-3	278	03/19/71	3 Hawaii
92	Glover, La'Roi	DT	6-1	280	7/4/74	1 San Diego State
74	Harrison, Nolan	DT	6-5	280	1/25/69	6 Indiana
94	Johnson, Kevin	DT	6-1	306	10/30/70	2 Texas Southern
51	Johnstone, Lance	DE	6-3	250	6/11/73	1 Temple
97	Maryland, Russell	DT	6-1	280	3/22/69	6 Miami
91	McGlockton, Chester	DT	6-4	320	9/16/69	5 Clemson
94	Smith, Anthony	DE	6-3	265	6/28/67	6 Arizona
56	Swilling, Pat	DE	6-3	245	10/25/64	11 Georgia Tech

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
33	Anderson, Eddie	S	6-1	210	7/22/63	11 Fort Valley State
24	Brown, Larry	CB	5-11	185	11/30/69	6 Texas Christian
20	Carter, Perry	CB	5-11	206	8/15/71	2 Southern Mississippi
46	Kidd, Carl	CB	6-1	200	6/14/73	2 Arkansas
25	Land, Dan	S	6-1	195	7/3/65	10 Albany State
29	Lewis, Albert	CB	6-2	205	10/6/60	14 Grambling
43	Lynch, Lorenzo	S	5-11	210	4/6/63	10 Sacramento State
23	Lyons, Lamar	S	6-3	210	3/25/73	1 Washington
36	McDaniel, Terry	CB	5-10	180	2/8/65	9 Tennessee
37	Trapp, James	CB	6-1	185	12/28/69	4 Clemson
29	Turner, Eric	S	6-1	207	9/20/68	6 UCLA

#	LINEBACKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
54	Biekert, Greg	LB	6-2	240	3/14/69	4 Colorado
58	Franklin, Keith	LB	6-2	230	3/4/70	2 South Carolina
53	Fredrickson, Rob	LB	6-4	240	5/13/71	3 Michigan State
57	Holmberg, Rob	LB	6-3	230	5/6/71	3 Penn State
50	Morton, Mike	LB	6-4	235	3/28/72	2 North Carolina

#	KICKERS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	Araguz, Leo	P	6-1	185	1/18/70	1 Stephen F. Austin
5	Ford, Cole	K	6-2	205	12/31/72	2 Southern California

#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
96	Butcher, Paul*	LB	6-0	235	11/8/63	10	Wayne State
21	Carrington, Darren*	S	6-2	200	10/10/66	8	Northern Arizona
55	Folston, James	LB	6-3	235	8/14/71	3	Northeast Louisiana
87	Glover, Andrew*	TE	6-6	250	8/12/67	6	Grambling
77	Stephens, Richard*	G	6-7	315	11/1/65	4	Tulsa
67	Turk, Dan*	C	6-4	290	8/25/62	12	Wisconsin

*Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	2	Darrell Russell	DL	6-4	320	USC
3	72	Adam Treu	G	6-5	302	Nebraska
3	85	Tim Kohn	T	6-5	305	Iowa State
4	123	Chad Levitt	RB	6-1	236	Cornell
6	172	Calvin Branch	RB	5-11	202	Colorado State
6	193	Grady Jackson	DE	6-2	320	Knoxville

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS



The Chiefs are conservative. Their best assets are still their offensive line and running game.

Ah, the old glory days. For coach **Marty Schottenheimer** and the Kansas City Chiefs, that was back on November 10, when they upset the Green Bay Packers. It was all gloom after that, though, with four losses in the last five games and a realization that something had to be done to revitalize the stagnant Chiefs.

Up to Date in Kansas City

The main "something" was the signing of **Elvis Grbac**, another ex-San Francisco 49er quarterback, who the Chiefs hope will be as much of a pleasant surprise as his predecessor, **Steve Bono**, was. It's a shaky hope. Obviously, San Francisco didn't look upon Grbac as the heir to **Steve Young**. Elvis could turn out to be another of Kansas City's temporary solutions.

Grbac played enough to launch 197 passes last year. He completed 61.9 percent of them for 1,236 yards and eight touchdowns with 10 interceptions. He had a passer rating of 72.2. Those numbers aren't a lot different from the ones compiled by **Bono**, who ended up losing his job to journeyman **Rich Gannon** late in the season. Grbac had some exhilarating moments in relief of **Young**, as well as some less than exhilarating moments.

Grbac will find that there are no aerial circuses in Kansas City. This is a prairie offense, not a West Coast offense. The Chiefs throw to their backs a great deal, and lately their wide receivers have not been confused with sprinters.

Caught in the Draft

More than a Band-Aid is needed for the offense, which scored 21 points or more in only five games last season. Only the Pittsburgh Steelers, another team in search of a quarterback, finished lower in the AFC in passing. But Kansas City did something about it on draft day, dealing themselves into position for **Tony Gonzalez** of California. He could become their best tight end since **Fred Arbanas**, who played in the

1960s. The Chiefs moved up in the draft to assure they would get **Gonzalez**, who also distinguished himself for Cal in the last NCAA basketball tournament. He could quickly become Grbac's favorite target over the middle.

Grbac is sure to make friends as well with rookie wide receiver **Kenny Lockett** of Kansas State. Lockett could start immediately since the other wide receivers are a mixed bag. **Lake Dawson** gets hurt a lot and **Chris Penn** (49 catches) and **Sean LaChapelle** (27 catches) are more like third receivers than starters. **Tamarick Vanover**, hurt twice last year, may be more valuable as a return man. Lockett scored 19 touchdowns in his final two college seasons and has a reputation as a smart receiver who finds the open area.

Chief Assets

Kansas City is a conservative team. Schottenheimer thinks his team's best assets are still the offensive line and the running game. Those assets, however, have been shrinking. The interior of the line remains first-rate: guards **Dave Szott** and **Will Shields** and center **Tim Grunhard**. But the Chiefs' disappointing first-round draftee in 1995, **Trezelle Jenkins**, and **Jeff Criswell** must step up at tackle. **John Alt**, one of the franchise's all-time best tackles, may be too much of a physical risk at this stage of his career. **Ricky Siglar** was found wanting at tackle.

As for the running game, it is **Greg Hill**'s time as the primary ball carrier. He had three games of 90 yards or more rushing in the second half of the season, and 645 yards overall, and the hope is that he's ready. Fullback **Kimble Anders** led the team in receiving (60 catches) for the third straight year and went to the Pro Bowl. **Marcus Allen** is 37, but he produced 67 first downs, converted an AFC-high 12 of 13 third-and-ones, and scored nine touchdowns last year.

Elvis Grbac takes over at quarterback in Kansas City.

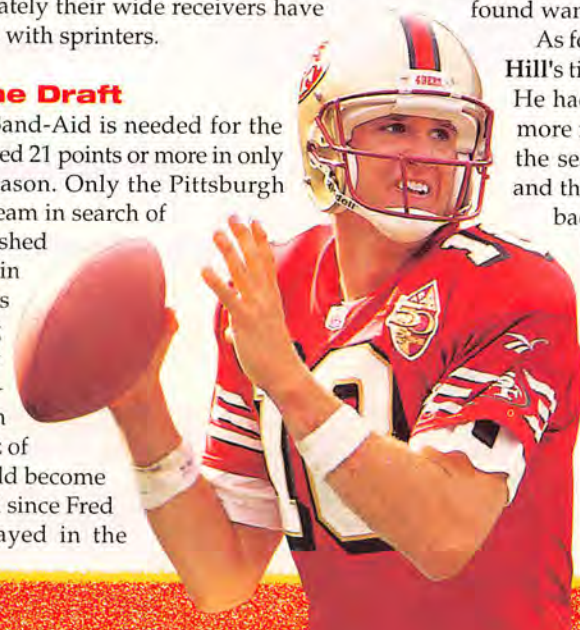
the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	306.2	22
Passing	180.6	26
Rushing	125.6	4
Scoring	18.6	24
Punting	41.7	24
Punt Returns	8.5	24
Kick Returns	23.7	7
Total Defense	325.3	18
Against Pass	221.1	22
Against Run	104.1	13
Points Allowed	18.8	11
Interceptions	17	T16
Sacks	31	24

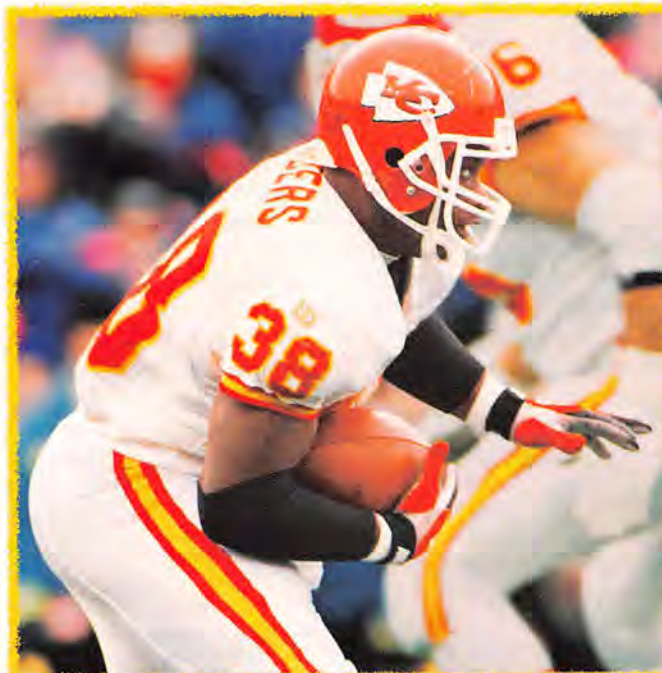


Linebacker **Derrick Thomas** (at top, above) and cornerback **Dale Carter** anchor the Chiefs' defense.



the key stats

Marcus Allen tops all active rushers with 11,738 yards. He led the Chiefs in rushing last season with 830 yards, and needs just 383 yards to pass **Franco Harris** for fifth place in the NFL record book and 575 to pass **Jim Brown** for fourth place. The Chiefs failed to make the playoffs last year for the first time since 1989.



Kimble Anders has caught 182 passes over the past three seasons, second to Larry Centers in the NFL among running backs.

Applying Pressure

Once you get by the aging tackles, Joe Phillips and Dan Saleaumua, things get sticky on the defensive line. Right end **Vaughn Booker** had only one sack. **John Browning** will attempt to replace long-time star Neil Smith, who defected to the Denver Broncos, at left end. With **Terry Wooden** of Seattle signed as a free agent, the Chiefs may use **Derrick Thomas** in a down position more often, with Wooden and the speedy **Anthony Davis** flanking middle man **Tracy Simien** in the line-backing unit.

Secondary to None

The principal defensive strength is the secondary, with **Dale Carter** and **James Hasty** on the corners. It would have been even stronger if the Chiefs had held on to free safety **Mark Collins**, last year's MVP. **Brian Washington** is the strong safety. The problems occur when the Chiefs have to play nickel and dime coverages. Youngsters **Jerome Woods** and **Reggie Tongue** must develop quickly.

Vanover's return work slipped from sensational to solid when he was injured in his expanded role as a receiver, so **Schottenheimer** may reduce his workload. **Pete Stoyanovich** wasn't the same kicker who starred in Miami. Not only did he slump (17 of 24 field goals), but he missed kicks or had them blocked six of 10 times during one dismal stretch. The Chiefs' punting also needs upgrading.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Marty Schottenheimer, Head Coach

Gunther Cunningham, Defensive Coordinator; **Paul Hackett**, Offensive Coordinator; **Al Saunders**, Assistant Head Coach/Receivers; **Mike Stock**, Special Teams; **Russ Ball**, Administrative Assistant to Head Coach; **Jim Erkenbeck**, Tight Ends/Offensive Assistant; **Woodrow Lowe**, Defensive Assistant/Assistant Special Teams; **Mike McCarthy**, Quarterbacks; **Jimmy Raye**, Running Backs; **Dave Redding**, Strength and Conditioning; **Kurt Schottenheimer**, Defensive Backs; **Darvin Wallis**, Defensive Assistant/Quality Control; **Mike Solari**, Offensive Line; **Bob Karmelwicz**, Defensive Line

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
13	Bono, Steve	QB	6-4	215	5/11/62	12	UCLA
12	Gannon, Rich	QB	6-3	205	12/20/65	10	Delaware
18	Grbac, Elvis	QB	6-5	232	8/13/70	3	Michigan
15	Matthews, Steve	QB	6-3	209	10/13/70	1	Memphis
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
76	Alt, John	T	6-8	307	5/30/62	13	Iowa
71	Barndt, Tom	G	6-3	285	3/14/72	1	Pittsburgh
69	Criswell, Jeff	T	6-7	294	3/7/64	10	Graceland
61	Grunhard, Tim	C	6-2	299	5/17/68	7	Notre Dame
74	Jenkins, Trezelle	T	6-7	323	3/13/73	2	Michigan
68	Shields, Will	G	6-3	308	9/15/71	4	Nebraska
65	Smith, Jeff	C	6-3	334	5/25/73	1	Tennessee
79	Szott, David	G	6-4	290	12/12/67	7	Penn State
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
32	Allen, Marcus	RB	6-2	210	3/26/60	15	Southern California
38	Anders, Kimble	RB	5-11	230	9/10/66	6	Houston
30	Bennett, Donnell	RB	6-1	241	9/14/72	3	Miami
27	Hill, Greg	RB	5-11	207	2/23/72	3	Texas A&M
48	McNair, Todd	RB	6-1	202	10/7/65	8	Temple
49	Richardson, Tony	RB	6-1	232	12/17/71	2	Auburn
22	Smith, J.J.	RB	6-1	203	10/14/72	2	Kansas State
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
88	Bailey, Victor	WR	6-2	196	7/3/70	4	Missouri
84	Horn, Joe	WR	6-1	195	1/16/72	1	Itawamba Junior College
83	Hughes, Danan	WR	6-2	211	12/11/70	4	Iowa
85	Johnson, Reggie	TE	6-2	255	1/27/68	6	Florida State
81	Jones, Reggie	WR	6-1	175	5/5/71	2	Louisiana State
18	LaChapelle, Sean	WR	6-3	205	7/29/70	4	UCLA
87	McBride, Oscar	TE	6-5	266	7/23/72	2	Notre Dame
87	Vanover, Tamarick	WR	5-11	213	2/25/74	2	Florida State
82	Walker, Derrick	TE	6-1	249	6/23/67	7	Michigan
83	Winans, Tydus	WR	5-11	180	7/26/72	3	Fresno State
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Booker, Vaughn	DE	6-5	293	2/24/68	3	Cincinnati
93	Browning, John	DE	6-4	264	9/30/73	1	West Virginia
96	Buckner, Brentson	DE	6-2	310	9/30/71	3	Clemson
63	Gaines, Wendall	DE	6-4	290	1/17/72	2	Oklahoma State
96	Hicks, Kerry	DT	6-5	283	12/29/72	1	Colorado
97	Maumalanga, Chris	DT	6-2	292	12/15/71	3	Kansas
77	McDaniels, Pellom	DE	6-3	292	2/21/68	4	Oregon State
75	Phillips, Joe	DT	6-5	310	7/15/63	11	Southern Methodist
67	Proby, Bryan	DE	6-5	285	11/30/71	2	Arizona State
94	Roberts, Tim	DE	6-6	318	4/14/69	5	Southern Mississippi
97	Saleaumua, Dan	DT	6-1	315	11/25/64	10	Arizona State
95	Sims, Tom	NT	6-2	310	4/18/67	6	Pittsburgh
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
44	Anderson, Darren	CB	5-10	187	1/11/69	5	Toledo
1	Bayless, Martin	S	6-2	219	10/11/62	13	Bowling Green
41	Cade, Eddie	S	6-1	210	8/4/73	2	Arizona State
34	Carter, Dale	CB	6-1	188	11/28/69	5	Tennessee
22	Green, Rogerick	CB	5-11	187	12/15/69	5	Kansas State
40	Hasty, James	CB	6-1	207	5/23/65	9	Washington State
47	Senters, Michael	CB	5-11	186	12/14/71	2	Northwestern
45	Stargell, Tony	CB	6-1	201	4/11/73	1	Oregon State
29	Washington, Brian	S	6-1	210	9/10/65	9	Nebraska
31	Woods, Jerome	S	6-2	198	3/17/73	1	Memphis
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Davis, Anthony	LB	6-1	237	3/7/69	4	Utah
55	Dumas, Troy	LB	6-3	238	9/30/72	1	Nebraska
59	Edwards, Donnie	LB	6-2	225	4/6/73	1	UCLA
57	Jamison, George	LB	6-1	235	9/30/62	10	Cincinnati
51	Manusky, Greg	LB	6-1	243	8/18/66	9	Colgate
52	Rogers, Tracy	LB	6-2	244	8/13/67	7	Fresno State
54	Simien, Tracy	LB	6-1	255	5/21/67	6	Texas Christian
58	Thomas, Derrick	LB	6-3	247	1/1/67	8	Alabama
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
10	Stoyanovich, Pete	K	5-11	195	4/28/67	8	Indiana
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Dawson, Lake	WR	6-1	207	1/2/72	3	Notre Dame
81	Penn, Chris	WR	6-0	200	4/20/71	3	Tulsa
66	Siglar, Ricky*	T	6-7	308	6/14/66	5	San Jose State

*Unrestricted Free Agent

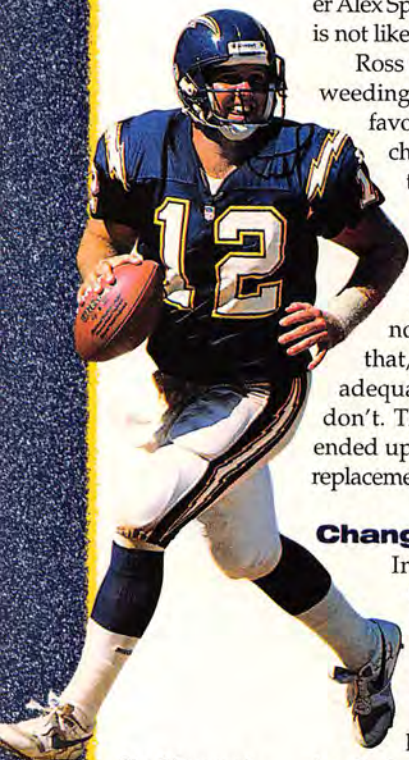
THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1	13	Tony Gonzalez	TE	6-4	245	California
2	47	Kevin Lockett	WR	6-0	171	Kansas State
4	110	Pat Barnes	QB	6-3	215	California
5	163	Charles Henley	RB	6-0	226	Kansas
6	195	Isaac Byrd	WR	6-0	173	Kansas
7	214	Nathan Parks	T	6-5	305	Stanford

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS



Quarterback Stan Humphries was protected well enough, but he needs reliable targets.



The Chargers' Stan Humphries (above) is looking for some offensive help.

Anyone looking for stability need not search in the Chargers' camp. There aren't many key figures left from the Super Bowl team of three seasons ago. The latest to leave is **Bobby Ross**, the coach who took the team to its highest point since the AFL merged with the NFL in 1970.

Ross, now in Detroit, never stays in any one place very long, but any coach caught in a vortex with owner Alex Spanos and general manager Bobby Beathard is not likely to enjoy longevity in the job.

Ross didn't help himself when he insisted on weeding out players he considered problems in favor of what he thought would be improved

chemistry and balance on the team. **Natrone Means**, at one time nearly 50 percent of the San Diego offense, was shown the door last year, and the Chargers got nothing in return. Not only that, but they didn't have an adequate replacement, and still don't. The chemistry which Ross ended up with was corn syrup as a replacement for high-octane gasoline.

Changing of the Guard

In Ross's place is **Kevin Gilbride**, best known as

Buddy Ryan's sideline punching bag when they both worked on the Houston Oilers' staff. Gilbride is better than that. As Jacksonville's offensive coordinator he deserves a sizable dollop of the credit for the Jaguars' playoff success.

Whether Gilbride can bring some order to the floating football team that has become the Chargers is another question. San Diego seems to have lost its sense of purpose. Take the running game. For the third season in a row, there will be a new feature back. Two years ago, it was Means, who was foolishly donated to Jacksonville. Last year it was **Leonard Russell**, now a free agent. Free agency brought two fullback types, **Carwell Gardner** from Baltimore and **Aaron Craver** from Denver.

Points Blank

The Chargers averaged 10 points a game in December, finishing 1-3, and they don't look any more potent now. Wide receiver **Tony Martin** and **Russell** scored 21 of their 32 offensive touchdowns. Martin, who caught 85 passes, including 14 for

touchdowns, was an important re-signing, but he's sure to receive blanket coverage this season.

Quarterback **Stan Humphries** was protected well enough (just 20 sacks), but he still missed three full games and parts of two others with a shoulder injury and a concussion. Humphries passed for 2,670 yards and 18 touchdowns, but what he needs are reliable targets in addition to **Martin**. **Charlie Jones** and **Andre Coleman** are useful, if small. The real tonic would be for **Bryan Still** to hold on to the ball. Beathard traded a first-round choice in order to draft Still in the second round in 1996. He has electrifying speed, but he electrifies too infrequently. He averaged 23.7 yards a catch, but he had just six catches.

The most promising draftee is North Carolina tight end **Freddie Jones**, who should team nicely with **Alfred Pupunu**, the blocker, and **Brian Roche**, the catcher. **Terrell Fletcher** is an undersized but reliable pass-catching back.

Line Changes

Raleigh McKenzie was signed from the Eagles to replace **Courtney Hall**, the brainy center who was done in by frequent injuries. **Vaughn Parker** and **Tony Berti** switch tack-

les, with strong man **Berti** playing the left side. **Joe Coccozzo** is the right guard, and **Ike Davis** gets the first shot to replace **Eric Moten** at left guard.

The biggest change in the offensive line is the coach. Gilbride hired **George DeLeone**, a legend as

San Diego re-signed wide receiver Tony Martin (below).



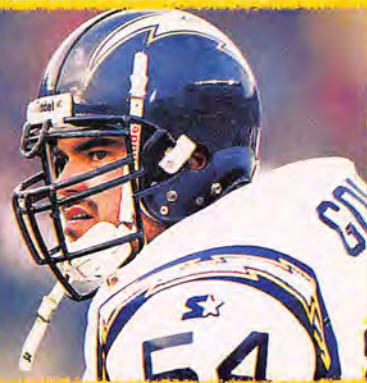
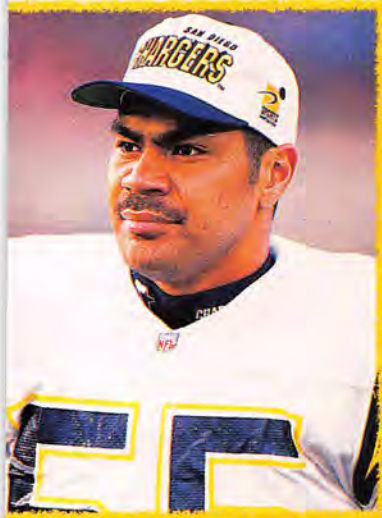
the numbers

team stats & league rank

Total Offense	291.9	26
Passing	209.9	14
Rushing	82.0	29
Scoring	19.4	18
Punting	45.6	3
Punt Returns	14.7	2
Kick Returns	21.6	T18
Total Defense	338.8	23
Against Pass	229.1	25
Against Run	109.7	17
Points Allowed	23.5	T24
Interceptions	22	T7
Sacks	33	T19

the key stats

San Diego averaged an NFL-low 3.2 yards per rush. Free-agent end **William Fuller** led the Eagles with 13 sacks. **Tony Martin** went over 1,000 yards in receiving for the second year in a row. **Junior Seau** led the Chargers with 138 tackles and went to the Pro Bowl for the sixth straight season. **Darren Bennett** set a team record with 87 punts.



Linebackers Junior Seau (left), who led the team with seven sacks, and Kurt Gouveia (above) provide veteran leadership for the Chargers' defense.

Syracuse University's offensive coordinator. DeLeone has never coached in the NFL, but he has a reputation for getting the most out of his young players, and McKenzie is the only Charger in the grizzled veteran category.

Tired of waiting for left end Chris Mims to become the pass rusher he envisioned, Beathard dropped him and signed **William Fuller** of Philadelphia. Fuller is 35, but he's consistently ferocious and has 45.5 sacks over the last four seasons. Maybe he can inspire right end **Marco Coleman**, who under-achieved in San Diego just as he did in Miami. **John Parrella** and **Reuben Davis** are the tackles.

Leading the Charge

Junior Seau was better than ever, leading the team with seven sacks and generally making a menace of himself. The other outside linebacker, **Lew Bush**, may be used more in the pass rush. **Kurt Gouveia** provides leadership in the middle.

The best-protected secondary position is cornerback, with **Dwayne Harper** on the left side and **Terrance Shaw** on the right. **Rodney Harrison**, the strong safety, led the team in interceptions for the second straight season and was voted its most valuable player. The Chargers rewarded him with a contract that pays him 10 times what he had been making. The well-traveled **Mike Dumas** gets the first shot at free safety, which became vacated when veteran Kevin Ross was released.

Alive and Kicking

Placekicker **John Carney** (29 of 36 field goals) remains a major part of the Chargers' offense. Australian punter **Darren Bennett** averaged 45.6 yards per kick and has the potential for improvement. Coleman remains a dangerous kickoff returner. Darrien Gordon, who was second in the AFC in punt returns, signed with Denver. In his place is **Eric Metcalf**.

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Kevin Gilbride, Head Coach

Nick Nicolau, Assistant Head Coach; Mike Sheppard, Offensive Coordinator; Joe Pascale, Defensive Coordinator; Frank Novak, Special Teams; George DeLeone, Offensive Line; Wayne Nunely, Defensive Line; Ollie Wilson, Running Backs; Jim Vecchiarella, Linebackers; Tyrone Dixon, Wide Receivers; Rod Perry, Defensive Backs; Bill Macdermott, Tight Ends; Mike Cavanaugh, Quality Control/Offense; Kevin Lempa, Administrative Assistant/Defense; Darrell Pasquale, Quality Control/Special Teams; John Hastings, Strength and Conditioning

#	QUARTERBACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Humphries, Stan	QB	6-2	223	4/14/65	8	Northeast Louisiana
8	Salisbury, Sean	QB	6-5	225	3/9/63	10	Southern California
5	Whelihan, Craig	QB	6-5	220	4/15/71	2	Pacific
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
75	Berti, Tony	T	6-6	300	6/21/72	2	Colorado
68	Cocozzo, Joe	G	6-4	300	8/7/70	4	Michigan
63	McKenzie, Raleigh	C	6-2	283	2/8/63	12	Tennessee
66	Mills, Jim	T	6-4	290	3/30/73	1	Idaho
65	Sienkiewicz, Troy	T	6-5	310	5/27/72	2	New Mexico State
64	Stoltenberg, Bryan	C	6-1	293	8/25/72	1	Colorado
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
33	Bouie, Kevin	RB	6-1	230	8/18/71	1	Mississippi State
35	Bradley, Freddie	RB	5-10	208	6/12/70	1	Sonoma State
33	Brown, Gary	RB	5-11	233	7/1/69	6	Penn State
29	Craver, Aaron	RB	6-1	220	12/18/68	6	Fresno State
41	Fletcher, Terrell	RB	5-8	196	9/14/73	2	Wisconsin
35	Gardner, Carwell	RB	6-2	240	11/27/66	7	Louisville
24	Hayden, Aaron	RB	6-1	218	4/13/73	2	Tennessee
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Binn, David	TE	6-3	250	2/6/72	3	California
84	Ellison, 'Omar	WR	6-1	200	10/8/71	2	Florida State
82	Jones, Charlie	WR	5-8	175	12/1/72	1	Fresno State
81	Martin, Tony	WR	6-1	181	9/5/65	7	Mesa
21	Metcalf, Eric	WR	5-10	188	1/23/68	9	Texas
85	Oliver, Jimmy	WR	5-10	173	1/30/73	2	Texas Christian
86	Pupunu, Alfred	TE	6-2	265	10/17/69	5	Weber State
87	Roche, Brian	TE	6-4	255	5/5/73	1	San Jose State
80	Still, Bryan	WR	5-11	174	6/3/74	1	Virginia Tech
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
90	Coleman, Marco	DE	6-3	267	12/18/69	5	Georgia Tech
93	Davis, Reuben	DT	6-5	320	5/7/65	9	North Carolina
95	Edwards, Vernon	DE	6-4	255	6/23/72	1	Southern Methodist
93	Fuller, William	DE	6-3	280	3/8/62	11	North Carolina
63	Ivey, Pat	DE	6-4	255	12/27/72	1	Missouri
99	Johnson, Raylee	DE	6-3	272	6/1/70	4	Arkansas
98	Lee, Shawn	DT	6-2	300	10/24/66	9	North Alabama
97	Parrella, John	DT	6-3	290	11/22/69	4	Nebraska
96	Sasa, Don	DT	6-2	286	9/16/72	2	Washington State
92	Soli, Junior	DT	6-2	290	11/15/74	1	Arkansas
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
44	Castle, Eric	S	6-3	212	3/15/70	4	Oregon
31	Clark, Willie	CB	5-10	186	1/6/72	3	Notre Dame
38	Dumas, Mike	S	5-11	198	3/18/69	6	Indiana
28	Harper, Dwayne	CB	5-11	174	3/29/66	9	South Carolina State
37	Harrison, Rodney	S	6-1	201	12/15/72	3	Western Illinois
38	Hendrix, David	S	6-1	213	5/29/72	2	Georgia Tech
40	Montreuil, Mark	CB	6-2	200	12/29/71	2	Concordia
29	Shaw, Terrance	CB	5-11	190	11/11/73	2	Stephen F. Austin
41	Thomas, Johnny	CB	5-9	191	8/3/64	9	Baylor
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
54	Cowart, Chris	LB	6-2	232	6/14/71	2	Florida State
51	Cummings, Joe	LB	6-2	242	6/8/72	1	Wyoming
54	Gouveia, Kurt	LB	6-1	240	9/14/64	10	Brigham Young
56	Sapp, Patrick	LB	6-4	258	5/11/73	1	Clemson
55	Seau, Junior	LB	6-3	255	01/19/69	7	Southern California
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	Bennett, Darren	P	6-5	235	1/9/65	2	NONE
3	Carney, John	K	5-11	170	4/20/64	9	Notre Dame
#	FREE AGENTS	POS	HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Bush, Lewis*	LB	6-2	245	12/2/69	4	Washington State
83	Coleman, Andre	WR	5-9	165	1/18/71	3	Kansas State
73	Davis, Isaac	G	6-3	320	4/8/72	3	Arkansas
60	Engel, Greg	C	6-3	285	1/18/71	3	Illinois
52	Gordon, Dwayne*	LB	6-1	240	11/2/69	4	New Hampshire
46	Harrell, Maurice*	TE	6-4	245	4/10/72	1	Georgia
88	May, Deems*	TE	6-4	263	3/6/69	5	North Carolina
89	Mitchell, Shannon	TE	6-2	245	3/28/72	3	Georgia
70	Parker, Vaughn	T	6-3	296	6/5/71	3	UCLA
42	Russell, Leonard	RB	6-2	240	11/17/69	6	Arizona State
72	Swayne, Harry*	T	6-5	295	2/2/65	10	Rutgers
59	Young, Glen*	LB	6-3	235	5/2/69	2	Syracuse

* Unrestricted Free Agent

THE DRAFT

RND	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
2	45	Freddie Jones	TE	6-4	260	North Carolina
3	74	Michael Hamilton	LB	6-2	244	North Carolina A&T
4	109	Raleigh Roundtree	T	6-5	295	South Carolina State
5	138	Kenny Bynum	RB	5-11	191	South Carolina State
5	146	Paul Bradford	DB	5-9	185	Portland State
6	178	Daniel Palmer	C	6-4	290	Air Force
7	218	Toran James	LB	6-4	247	North Carolina A&T
7	237	Tony Corbin	QB	6-4	215	Cal St.-Sacramento

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WE PAY!

Fantasy

The inside track on strategy and hidden performers

by Dennis LePore
Lake County (OH) News-Herald

Fantasy football offers the armchair quarterback a unique sports experience. Unlike fantasy baseball and basketball team owners, a fantasy football team owner needs to make roster moves just once a week. He can then sit back and watch his players on Sundays without having to check the box scores every day. There are an estimated 500,000 fantasy football leagues across the country, some more involved than others, and each may have its own rules.

A League of Their Own

This, then, becomes every fantasy team owner's first task: Know the league's scoring rules! Player rankings at each position will be affected by scoring methods. In touchdown-only leagues, a goal-line runner (Marcus Allen, for example) may be as valuable as Barry Sanders. A back such as Larry Centers will be valuable only in leagues that credit players with both rushing and receiving yards. Some leagues deduct points from quarterbacks for interceptions. This can decrease the value of, say, Vinny Testaverde and Mark Brunell, who have had higher interception-to-touchdown ratios.

Draft Strategy

Your league's rules will also help determine your draft strategy. Many fantasy leagues heavily weight quarterback production. You will need to draft a QB early in these leagues to secure a solid starter. In other leagues, passing touchdowns are worth just four points. Here, you don't want to waste an early pick on a QB unless he is a proven franchise player, such as Brett Favre.

Roster Size

Keep your starting roster size in mind when drafting. Most leagues require two starting running backs. This will result in a quick drain of the known talent at the position; when coupled with the unpredictable nature at wide-receiver, it probably makes running back the pivotal spot on your roster. Look for backs who have a few consistent years behind them, and consider how they are used. Full-time starters who don't come out on third downs are a better choice than a Dave Meggett-type back.

Team System

Always consider a team's system and coaching when drafting. The run-and-shoot will produce good offensive numbers, and Tony Dungy will undoubtedly continue to improve Tampa Bay's defense. An offense which is constantly trailing will certainly put up bigger numbers than a team which sits on a lead.

Talent Levels

Rank players in talent tiers. Your first pick should always be used on a top-level player at his position (that is, Brett Favre, Jerry Rice, Emmitt Smith). There is a clear drop-off of talent after each handful of players. It is important to secure guys who will make an impact, so don't place too much emphasis on position early. Get the best talent/potential available.

Maneuvering for Position

Tight ends, kickers, and defenses should usually be drafted in later rounds. Tight ends Ben Coates and Shannon Sharpe may be the only exceptions here, but, again, know your rules. Some leagues require a starting tight end, while others lump the position with wide receivers. It's nearly impossible to pre-

dict league leaders in kicking or defense, so before drafting these positions, be sure you have your starting five (1 QB, 2 RBs, and 2 WRs).

Go for It

Overly conservative fantasy coaches rarely win. All the players are good—that's why it's called fantasy! An unexpected star, culled from the middle rounds, usually means the difference between bragging rights and second place. Rookies may not contribute often, but Terry Glenn in 1996 and Curtis Martin in '95 helped more than a few owners reach their fantasy championships. Don't be afraid to use that ninth-round pick on a hunch.

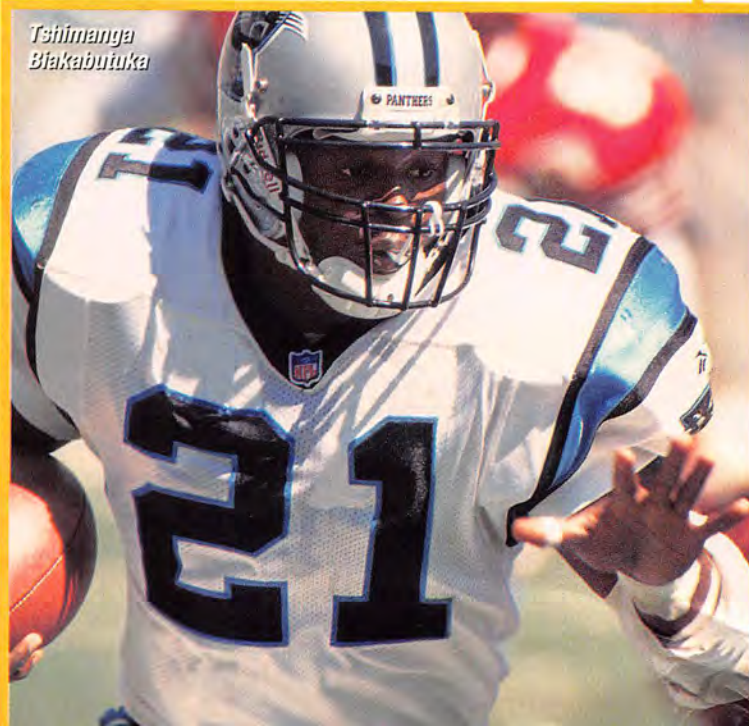
SLEEPER RUNNING BACKS

(Projections are for carries, yards, and TDs.)

Tshimanga Biakabutuka, Panthers

Biakabutuka's rookie season ended prematurely in week four with a knee injury, but he is expected to be the starter this year. He is a franchise-type back who has improved his pass-catching skills in the short time he has been working in the pro-style offense.

Projection: 225-1,000-8.



Tshimanga
Biakabutuka



Ki-Jana
Carter

Gary Brown, Chargers

Brown gained over 1,000 yards for Houston in 1993, but fell victim to poor conditioning habits, and was out of football in '96. Just 28 years old, he has renewed dedication to himself and the game, having dropped 30 pounds, to a trim 233. "I'm more mature now," he said. "My skills are still at a high level, and I want to prove it."

Projection: 245-1,000-8.

Ki-Jana Carter, Bengals

Carter is now the No. 1 running back, but the Bengals drafted Washington RB Corey Dillon as insurance. Carter could be a big sleeper if Cincinnati shores up its offensive line and develops a blocking fullback. When healthy, Carter is an explosive running back and a dangerous receiver. He became a more instinctive runner last year when he was used exclusively in short-yardage situations.

Projection: 250-1,000-10.

Chris Darkins, Packers

A fine athlete, Darkins was on injured reserve last fall. He has all the tools and could very well get some action as a change-of-pace back. He is a hard worker with a nice combination of speed, hands, and strength. A powerful straight-ahead type, he can also juke a little bit.

Projection: 140-600-5.

Greg Hill, Chiefs

Hill's two 100-yard games came on artificial turf. He is a big sleeper if he replaces Marcus Allen as the featured back—a decision that has to be made by Marty Schottenheimer. This season will be Allen's last in a Chiefs' uniform.

Projection: 200-850-5.

Napoleon Kaufman, Raiders

A hard worker who has the potential to develop into an electrifying all-purpose scatback, Kaufman is on the small side (5-9), but has raw speed and is incredibly strong for his size. Al Davis wants a power-running/deep-passing game, but he does not have the personnel for it. Kauf-

man is more of an outside threat, and the offensive line needs to be upgraded.

Projection: 175-850-5.

Leeland McElroy, Cardinals

This exciting halfback with game-breaking speed is a sleeper if he gets regular playing time. Scouts question the undersized youngster's durability against constant NFL pounding, but used properly, McElroy could emerge.

Projection: 150-750-5.

Natrone Means, Jaguars

A better blocker than James Stewart, Means starts training camp this year as the No. 1 running back. With an additional 10 pounds, Means really came on late in the year. He says the additional weight made him feel more powerful, and it showed with his determined running in the last few weeks of the season and in the playoffs.

Projection: 325-1,200-12.

Tyrone Wheatley, Giants

Wheatley could blossom under the Giants' new offense because the backs will be catching a lot of short passes. Jim Fassel knows how to run an offense and get the most out of its dangerous weapons.

Projection: 135-500-5.

SLEEPER QUARTERBACKS

(Projections are for yards and TDs.)

Kerry Collins, Panthers

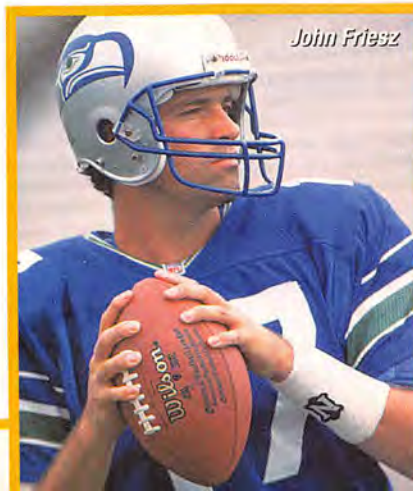
Collins (11 interceptions) is an intelligent, confident young man with a rifle arm and no mobility. He emerged as a dependable quarterback last year; further improvement is expected this season.

Projection: 2,800-20.

John Friesz, Seahawks

An extremely accurate pocket passer, Friesz (10 interceptions) will finally get a chance to start from day one, but he is injury-prone and has limited mobility.

Projection: 3,300-22.



John Friesz

Elvis Grbac, Chiefs

Grbac (13 interceptions) displayed good leadership abilities and a strong arm when Steve Young went down with injuries in the last two years. But Grbac's inconsistency, and the fact that he is moving to a more conservative version of the West Coast offense, temper expectations.

Projection: 3,000-20.

Steve McNair, Oilers

McNair (15 interceptions) is still raw by NFL standards, but has a great arm and is quickly gaining a better understanding of reading and reacting to various defensive schemes. He has tremendous potential. He will also rack up yards and TDs with his scrambling ability.

Projection: 3,300-22.

SLEEPER WIDE RECEIVERS

(Projections are for receptions, yards, and touchdowns.)



Lake
Dawson

Lake Dawson, Chiefs

Dawson is a tough, athletic player with good hands. His only drawback is the lack of burner speed, but this should not stop him from making a big contribution as he returns from knee surgery. He is expected to be ready for training camp.

Projection: 80-1000-5.

David Dunn, Bengals

Dunn had a solid sophomore year, establishing himself as a competent No. 3 receiver and reliable possession target. He is big, tough, and sure-handed, and will garner more action this season.

Projection: 55-750-5.

Bobby Engram, Bears

Not a burner, but Engram has the hands and pro-style moves to develop into a reliable possession receiver. He runs very well after the catch and has a chance to be a regular this year.

Projection: 75-950-5.



Michael Westbrook

Joey Galloway, Seahawks

Galloway's expected breakout in 1996 did not happen, but Seattle plans on moving him to flanker and making him the go-to guy in the offense. A 100-catch season is not out of the question.

Projection: 90-1,450-10.

Keyshawn Johnson, Jets

A big, physical player who has a chance to develop into an exciting Herman Moore-type producer. He is a future Pro Bowl player.

Projection: 80-1,250-8.

Chris T. Jones, Eagles

The Eagles' No. 2 receiver, Jones has size, hands, and running ability. Ray Rhodes wants to pass more this year out of the West Coast offense, and Jones fits into that scheme perfectly.

Projection: 75-1,000-6.

Johnnie Morton, Lions

Morton steps into Brett Perriman's position opposite Herman Moore, and he should have his first big year. Not a burner, he is elusive with good hands and runs well after the catch.

Projection: 75-1,050-8.

Eric Moulds, Bills

Moulds has good size, reliable hands, and runs well after the catch. He does not have burner speed, but has a knack for making things happen and is a hard worker. He'll be the No. 3 man this year with a chance to start later in the season.

Projection: 50-850-5.

Muhsin Muhammad, Panthers

Muhammad is big and fast with the ability to break tackles and run after the

catch. He will be featured in the offense this year, with a chance to catch 70-80 balls—especially with the further development of third-year quarterback Kerry Collins.

Projection: 80-1,100-7.

Chris Sanders, Oilers

Some of the blame for Sanders' disappointing season has been placed on receivers coach Les Steckel and former offensive coordinator Jerry Rhome. Play-calling had been conservative, and not enough time was spent teaching Sanders the nuances of the position. Expect this explosive youngster to be featured more in the coming season.

Projection: 70-1,200-8.

Frank Sanders, Cardinals

Strong and confident, Sanders is a possession receiver even though he is capable of making the big play. The Cardinals will look his way more often in '97.

Projection: 75-1,000-5.

Rod Smith, Broncos

The Broncos believe that Smith, a deep threat, and Willie Green will step up since Anthony Miller is on his way out.

Projection: 55-900-6.

Michael Westbrook, Redskins

Westbrook had some loose cartilage removed from his left knee after the season ended. Since talking with Art Monk, Westbrook said his attitude has changed. "I am going to work out every day and come into camp stronger than I ever have been in my entire life," he said. "I'm positive I can be unstoppable."

Projection: 75-1,200-5.

SLEEPER TIGHT ENDS

(Projections are for receptions, yards, and touchdowns.)

Jamie Asher, Redskins

Asher has good all-around skills. He can block, catch the ball in traffic, and go deep. Asher should contribute since Norv Turner likes to throw to his tight ends.

Projection: 50-650-6.

Eric Bjornson, Cowboys

This Jay Novacek clone should significantly improve in his second full season, allowing time for No. 1 pick David LaFleur to develop.

Projection: 50-500-5.

Troy Drayton, Dolphins

Drayton finished strong but did not have a grasp of the offense after coming from St. Louis at midseason. He should

produce with the benefits of a full training camp and a new long-term contract.

Projection: 40-500-5.

Rickey Dudley, Raiders

Dudley has tremendous potential and will improve every year. He has the athleticism, size, hands, and toughness to develop into a Pro Bowl-caliber performer quickly. His blocking needs work.

Projection: 50-600-6.

COMEBACK CANDIDATES

Robert Brooks, Packers

Brooks returns after knee surgery last October as the main threat for the Packers. The emergence of Antonio Freeman will hurt his production, however.

Horace Copeland, Buccaneers

Copeland's rehab is going well. The speedy wide receiver was coming off a fine mini-camp in '96 when he tore his patella tendon in August, ending his season.

Christian Fauria, Seahawks

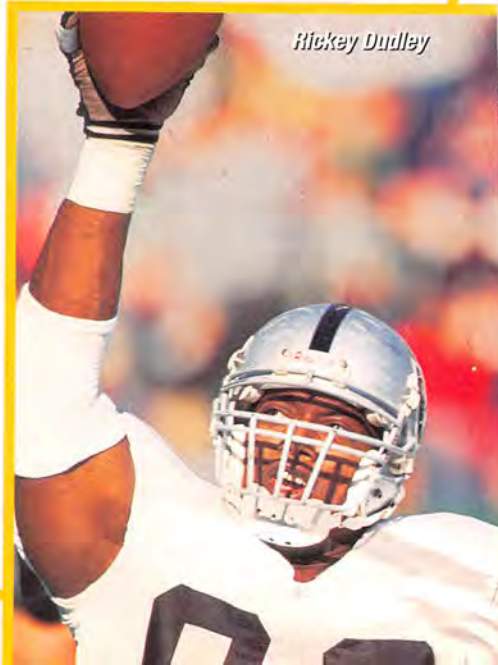
An impressive all-around player, Fauria can block, catch the ball in traffic, and stretch the defense. He will come on as the season progresses.

Robet Smith, Vikings

He has seen limited duty because of knee and hip problems the last four years. Always a sleeper because of his vast potential, he must prove more durable.

Yancey Thigpen, Steelers

Thigpen had surgery to speed the recovery of a stress fracture in his right foot. He expects to be at full strength by mini-camp and will start at wide receiver opposite Charles Johnson this year.



Rickey Dudley

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AFC STATS

RECORDS

Points: 513, Houston (1961), Miami (1984)

TEAM	TD	TOR	TOP	TOM	XP	2PT	FG	FGA	SAF	POINTS
New England	48	15	27	6	39	4	27	35	1	418
Denver	47	20	26	1	46	0	21	28	0	391
Cincinnati	43	14	25	4	41	2	23	28	0	372
Baltimore	45	10	34	1	34	5	19	25	0	371
Houston	35	12	22	1	35	0	32	38	2	345
Pittsburgh	39	18	15	6	37	2	23	30	0	344
Oakland	38	7	28	3	36	0	24	31	2	340
Miami	41	14	22	5	35	1	18	29	1	339
Jacksonville	33	13	19	1	27	5	30	36	0	325
Buffalo	35	14	18	3	33	2	24	29	0	319
Indianapolis	30	9	16	5	27	0	36	40	1	317
Seattle	33	16	14	3	27	4	28	34	0	317
San Diego	32	7	23	2	31	0	29	36	0	310
Kansas City	35	15	18	2	34	0	17	24	1	297
NY Jets	33	8	22	3	26	2	17	24	0	279
AFC Average	37.8	12.8	21.9	3.1	33.9	1.8	24.5	31.1	0.5	338.9

TEAM SCORING

RECORDS

Points: 155, Gino Cappelletti, Boston (1964)

Field Goals: 36, Cary Blanchard, Indianapolis (1996)

Extra Points: 66, Uwe von Schamann, Miami (1984)

SCORING

KICKERS	XP	XPA	FG	FGA	PTS
Blanchard, Cary, Ind.	27	27	36	40	135
Del Greco, Al, Hou.	35	35	32	38	131
Vinatieri, Adam, N.E.	39	42	27	35	120
Carney, John, S.D.	31	31	29	36	118
Hollis, Mike, Jac.	27	27	30	36	117
Peterson, Todd, Sea.	27	27	28	34	111
Pelfrey, Doug, Cin.	41	41	23	28	110
Elam, Jason, Den.	46	46	21	28	109
Ford, Cole, Oak.	36	36	24	31	108
Johnson, Norm, Pit.	37	37	23	30	106
Christie, Steve, Buf.	33	33	24	29	105
Stover, Matt, Bal.	34	35	19	25	91
Nedney, Joe, Mia.	35	36	18	29	89
Stoyanovich, Pete, K.C.	34	34	17	24	85
Lowery, Nick, NYJ.	26	27	17	24	77

RECORDS

Completions: 404, Warren Moon, Houston (1991)

Touchdowns: 48, Dan Marino, Miami (1984)

Yards: 5084, Dan Marino, Miami (1984)

Longest TD: 99 yards, Jim Plunkett to Cliff Branch, L.A. Raiders (1983); Stan Humphries to Tony Martin, San Diego (1994)

224 + ATTEMPTS	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	AVG	TD	TD%	LONG	INT	INT%	SACKS	LOSS	RATING
Elway, John, Den.	466	287	61.6	3328	7.14	26	5.6	51	14	3.0	26	194	89.2
Testaverde, Vinny, Bal.	549	325	59.2	4177	7.61	33	6.0	86t	19	3.5	34	270	88.7
Marino, Dan, Mia.	373	221	59.2	2795	7.49	17	4.6	74t	9	2.4	18	131	87.8
Brunell, Mark, Jac.	557	353	63.4	4367	7.84	19	3.4	62	20	3.6	50	257	84.0
Bledsoe, Drew, N.E.	623	373	59.9	4086	6.56	27	4.3	84t	15	2.4	30	190	83.7
Hostetler, Jeff, Oak.	402	242	60.2	2548	6.34	23	5.7	62t	14	3.5	32	181	83.2
Blake, Jeff, Cin.	549	308	56.1	3624	6.60	24	4.4	61t	14	2.6	44	278	80.3
Chandler, Chris, Hou.	320	184	57.5	2099	6.56	16	5.0	63t	11	3.4	25	153	79.7
Humphries, Stan, S.D.	416	232	55.8	2670	6.42	18	4.3	63t	13	3.1	20	187	76.7
Harbaugh, Jim, Ind.	405	232	57.3	2630	6.49	13	3.2	51	11	2.7	36	190	76.3
Kelly, Jim, Buf.	379	222	58.6	2810	7.41	14	3.7	67t	19	5.0	37	287	73.2
Tomczak, Mike, Pit.	401	222	55.4	2767	6.90	15	3.7	70t	17	4.2	16	105	71.8
Reich, Frank, NYJ.	331	175	52.9	2205	6.66	15	4.5	52t	16	4.8	14	94	68.9
Bono, Steve, K.C.	438	235	53.7	2572	5.87	12	2.7	69	13	3.0	22	161	68.0
Mirer, Rick, Sea.	265	136	51.3	1546	5.83	5	1.9	60	12	4.5	22	84	56.6

RECORDS

Number: 108, Rick Tuten, Seattle (1992)

Average: 46.9, Greg Montgomery, Houston (1992)

Longest: 98 yards, Steve O'Neal, N.Y. Jets (1969)

40 + PUNTS	NO	YARDS	LONG	AVG	TB	BLK	OPP RET	RET YDS	IN 20	NET AVG
Kidd, John, Mia.	78	3611	63	46.3	11	0	48	368	26	38.8
Gardocki, Chris, Ind.	68	3105	61	45.7	2	0	38	413	23	39.0
Bennett, Darren, S.D.	87	3967	66	45.6	6	0	51	612	23	37.2
Johnson, Lee, Cin.	80	3630	67	45.4	17	1	38	502	16	34.4
Hansen, Brian, NYJ.	74	3293	69	44.5	8	0	40	429	13	36.5
Roby, Reggie, Hou.	67	2973	68	44.4	7	1	31	251	25	38.0
Tuten, Rick, Sea.	85	3746	66	44.1	7	1	52	640	20	34.5
Montgomery, Greg, Bal.	68	2980	67	43.8	5	1	27	273	23	37.8
Barker, Bryan, Jac.	69	3016	62	43.7	8	0	44	400	16	35.6
Tupa, Tom, N.E.	63	2739	62	43.5	7	0	34	334	14	36.0
Rouen, Tom, Den.	65	2714	57	41.8	5	0	23	261	16	36.2
Aguiar, Louie, K.C.	88	3667	68	41.7	10	0	42	492	25	33.8
Mohr, Chris, Buf.	101	4194	80	41.5	13	0	40	246	27	36.5
Miller, Josh, Pit.	55	2256	61	41.0	8	0	24	248	18	33.6
Gossett, Jeff, Oak.	57	2264	64	39.7	5	0	28	192	19	34.6

t = touchdown

PASSING

RECORDS

Touchdowns: 23, O.J. Simpson, Buffalo (1975)

NON-KICKERS	TD	TOR	TOP	TOM	2PT	PTS
Martin, Curtis, N.E.	17	14	3	0	1	104
Davis, Terrell, Den.	15	13	2	0	0	90
Jackson, Michael, Bal.	14	0	14	0	2	88
Martin, Tony, S.D.	14	0	14	0	0	84
Pickens, Carl, Cin.	12	0	12	0	1	74
Abdul-Jabbar, Karim, Mia.	11	11	0	0	0	66
Bettis, Jerome, Pit.	11	11	0	0	0	66
Sharpe, Shannon, Den.	10	0	10	0	0	60
Stewart, James, Jac.	10	8	2	0	0	60
Alexander, Derrick, Bal.	9	0	9	0	1	56
Coates, Ben, N.E.	9	0	9	0	1	56
Allen, Marcus, K.C.	9	9	0	0	0	54
Brown, Tim, Oak.	9	0	9	0	0	54
Carter, Ki-Jana, Cin.	9	8	1	0	0	54
Smith, Lamar, Sea.	8	8	0	0	3	54
Johnson, Keyshawn, NYJ.	8	0	8	0	1	50
Fenner, Derrick, Oak.	8	4	4	0	0	48
Galloway, Joey, Sea.	8	0	7	1	0	48
George, Eddie, Hou.	8	8	0	0	0	48
Harrison, Marvin, Ind.	8	0	8	0	0	48
McDuffie, O.J., Mia.	8	0	8	0	0	48
Stewart, Kordell, Pit.	8	5	3	0	0	48
Thomas, Thurman, Buf.	8	8	0	0	0	48
Faulk, Marshall, Ind.	7	7	0	0	0	42
McCaffrey, Ed, Den.	7	0	7	0	0	42
Murrell, Adrian, NYJ.	7	6	1	0	0	42
Russell, Leonard, S.D.	7	7	0	0	0	42
Smith, Jimmy, Jac.	7	0	7	0	0	42
Davis, Willie, Hou.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Glenn, Terry, N.E.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Graham, Jeff, NYJ.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Hastings, Andre, Pit.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Reed, Andre, Buf.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Wycheck, Frank, Hou.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Holmes, Darick, Buf.	5	4	1	0	1	32
Warren, Chris, Sea.	5	5	0	0	1	32
Byner, Ernest, Bal.	5	4	1	0	0	30
Hill, Greg, K.C.	5	4	1	0	0	30
Morris, Bam, Bal.	5	4	1	0	0	30
Penn, Chris, K.C.	5	0	5	0	0	30
Scott, Darnay, Cin.	5	0	5	0	0	30
Early, Quinn, Buf.	4	0	4	0	1	26
Anders, Kimble, K.C.	4	2	2	0	0	24
Dilger, Ken, Ind.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Dudley, Rickey, Oak.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Elway, John, Den.	4	4	0	0	0	24



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AFC STATS

NON-KICKERS	TD	TOR	TOP	TOM	2PT	PTS
Hill, Randal, Mia.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Jefferson, Shawn, N.E.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Jett, James, Oak.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Jones, Charlie, S.D.	4	0	4	0	0	24
McGee, Tony, Cin.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Miller, Anthony, Den.	4	1	3	0	0	24
Sanders, Chris, Hou.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Spikes, Irving, Mia.	4	3	1	0	0	24
Brunell, Mark, Jac.	3	3	0	0	2	22
McCardell, Keenan, Jac.	3	0	3	0	2	22
Jackson, Willie, Jac.	3	0	3	0	1	20
Johnson, Charles, Pit.	3	0	3	0	1	20
Barnett, Fred, Mia.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Chrebet, Wayne, NYJ.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Craver, Aaron, Den.	3	2	1	0	0	18
Harmon, Ronnie, Hou.	3	1	2	0	0	18
Hobbs, Daryl, Oak.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Means, Natrone, Jac.	3	2	1	0	0	18
Moulds, Eric, Buf.	3	0	2	1	0	18
Tasker, Steve, Buf.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Byars, Keith, N.E.	2	0	2	0	1	14
Gash, Sam, N.E.	2	0	2	0	1	14
Testaverde, Vinny, Bal.	2	2	0	0	1	14
Belser, Jason, Ind.	2	0	0	2	0	12
Bieniemy, Eric, Cin.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Blades, Brian, Sea.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Blake, Jeff, Cin.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Coleman, Andre, S.D.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Dunn, David, Cin.	2	0	1	1	0	12
Fletcher, Terrell, S.D.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Glenn, Aaron, NYJ.	2	0	0	2	0	12
Kaufman, Napoleon, Oak.	2	1	1	0	0	12
Kelly, Jim, Buf.	2	2	0	0	0	12
LaChapelle, Sean, K.C.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Lake, Carmell, Pit.	2	0	0	2	0	12
McGinest, Willie, N.E.	2	0	0	2	0	12
McNair, Steve, Hou.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Mirer, Rick, Sea.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Pegram, Erric, Pit.	2	1	0	1	0	12
Pritchett, Stanley, Mia.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Proehl, Ricky, Sea.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Rison, Andre, Jac.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Russell, Derek, Hou.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Slaughter, Webster, NYJ.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Smith, Rod, Den.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Thigpen, Yancey, Pit.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Turner, Floyd, Bal.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Vanover, Tamarick, K.C.	2	0	1	1	0	12
Woodson, Rod, Pit.	2	0	0	2	0	12
Brady, Kyle, NYJ.	1	0	1	0	1	8
Hearst, Garrison, Cin.	1	0	1	0	1	8
Shedd, Kenny, Oak.	1	0	1	0	0	*8
Ambrose, Ashley, Cin.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Anderson, Richie, NYJ.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Arvie, Herman, Bal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Aska, Joe, Oak.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Bailey, Aaron, Ind.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Ball, Jerry, Oak.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Bartrum, Mike, N.E.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Blackmon, Robert, Sea.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Brantley, Chris, Buf.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Braxton, Tyrone, Den.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Broussard, Steve, Sea.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Brown, Corwin, N.E.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Bruschi, Teddy, N.E.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Buckley, Terrell, Mia.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Caldwell, Mike, Bal.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Carolan, Brett, Mia.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Carter, Dale, K.C.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Clark, Willie, S.D.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Cline, Tony, Buf.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Cobb, Reggie, NYJ.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Cothran, Jeff, Cin.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Crockett, Zack, Ind.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Cunningham, Rick, Oak.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Daniel, Eugene, Ind.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Dawkins, Sean, Ind.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Dawson, Lake, K.C.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Douglas, Hugh, NYJ.	1	0	0	1	0	6

Fauria, Christian, Sea.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Floyd, Malcolm, Hou.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Francis, James, Cin.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Glover, Andrew, Oak.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Gordon, Darrien, S.D.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Green, Eric, Bal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Grier, Marrio, N.E.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Harbaugh, Jim, Ind.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Hasty, James, K.C.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Herrrod, Jeff, Ind.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Hill, Sean, Mia.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Hostetler, Jeff, Oak.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Hughes, Danan, K.C.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Hundon, James, Cin.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Jackson, Calvin, Mia.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Johnson, Reginald, K.C.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Johnstone, Lance, Oak.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Jones, James, Bal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Kinchen, Brian, Bal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Law, Ty, N.E.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Lester, Tim, Pit.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Lewis, Darryll, Hou.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Lewis, Jermaine, Bal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
McDaniel, Terry, Oak.	1	0	0	1	0	6
McNair, Todd, K.C.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Meggett, David, N.E.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Miller, Scott, Mia.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Mills, Ernie, Pit.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Milne, Brian, Cin.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Mitchell, Pete, Jac.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Norgard, Erik, Hou.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Northern, Gabe, Buf.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Ogden, Jonathan, Bal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Perry, Darren, Pit.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Pollard, Marcus, Ind.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Pritchard, Mike, Sea.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Pupunu, Alfred, S.D.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Richardson, Tony, K.C.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Sherrard, Mike, Den.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Spencer, Jimmy, Cin.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Stablein, Brian, Ind.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Thomas, Lamar, Mia.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Thomas, Rodney, Hou.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Thomas, Zach, Mia.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Van Dyke, Alex, NYJ.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Wainright, Frank, Mia.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Walker, Derrick, K.C.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Warren, Lamont, Ind.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Washington, Mickey, Jac.	1	0	0	1	0	6
White, David, Buf.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Williams, Calvin, Bal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Williams, Darryl, Sea.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Williams, Ronnie, Sea.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Wilson, Robert, Mia.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Bruener, Mark, Pit.	0	0	0	0	1	2
Dent, Richard, Ind.	0	0	0	0	0	*2
Drayton, Troy, Mia.	0	0	0	0	1	2
Gardner, Carwell, Bal.	0	0	0	0	1	2
Jackson, Steve, Hou.	0	0	0	0	0	*2
Saleaumua, Dan, K.C.	0	0	0	0	0	*2

* Safety

RECORDS

Carries: 390, Barry Foster, Pittsburgh (1992)

Yards: 2003, O.J. Simpson, Buffalo (1973)

Touchdowns: 19, Earl Campbell, Houston (1979);
Chuck Muncie, San Diego (1981)

50 + YARDS	ATT	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Davis, Terrell, Den.	345	1538	4.5	71t	13
Bettis, Jerome, Pit.	320	1431	4.5	50t	11
George, Eddie, Hou.	335	1368	4.1	76	8
Murrell, Adrian, NYJ.	301	1249	4.1	78	6
Martin, Curtis, N.E.	316	1152	3.6	57	14
Abdul-Jabbar, Karim, Mia.	307	1116	3.6	29	11
Thomas, Thurman, Buf.	281	1033	3.7	36	8
Kaufman, Napoleon, Oak.	150	874	5.8	77	1
Warren, Chris, Sea.	203	855	4.2	51	5
Hearst, Garrison, Cin.	225	847	3.8	24	0
Allen, Marcus, K.C.	206	830	4.0	35	9
Morris, Bam, Bal.	172	737	4.3	19	4
Stewart, James, Jac.	190	723	3.8	34	8

RUSHING

Russell, Leonard, S.D.	219	713	3.3	21	7
Smith, Lamar, Sea.	153	680	4.4	29	8
Hill, Greg, K.C.	135	645	4.8	28	4
Byner, Ernest, Bal.	159	634	4.0	42	4
Faulk, Marshall, Ind.	198	587	3.0	43	7
Holmes, Darick, Buf.	189	571	3.0	37	4
Pegram, Erric, Pit.	97	509	5.2	27	1
Means, Natrone, Jac.	152	507	3.3	35	2
Williams, Harvey, Oak.	121	431	3.6	44	0
Brunell, Mark, Jac.	80	396	5.0	33	3
Aska, Joe, Oak.	62	326	5.3	38	1
Blake, Jeff, Cin.	72	317	4.4	18	2
Spikes, Irving, Mia.	87	316	3.6	49	3
Fletcher, Terrell, S.D.	77	282	3.7	19	0
Bieniemy, Eric, Cin.	56	269	4.8	33t	2
Carter, Ki-Jana, Cin.	91	264	2.9	31t	8
Hebron, Vaughn, Den.	49	262	5.3	47	0
Elway, John, Den.	50	249	5.0	22	4
Fenner, Derrick, Oak.	67	245	3.7	17	4
Craver, Aaron, Den.	59	232	3.9	28	2
Warren, Lamont, Ind.	67	230	3.4	53	1
Anders, Kimble, K.C.	54	201	3.7	15t	2
Harbaugh, Jim, Ind.	48	192	4.0	21	1
Mirer, Rick, Sea.	33	191	5.8	33	2
Testaverde, Vinny, Bal.	34	188	5.5	22	2
Groce, Cliff, Ind.	46	184	4.0	24	0
Hostetler, Jeff, Oak.	37	179	4.8	17	1
Stewart, Kordell, Pit.	39	171	4.4	80t	5
McNair, Steve, Hou.	31	169	5.5	24t	2
Bennett, Donnell, K.C.	36	166	4.6	34	0
Hayden, Aaron, S.D.	55	166	3.0	13	0
Crockett, Zack, Ind.	31	164	5.3	25	0
Thomas, Rodney, Hou.	49	151	3.1	24t	1
Anderson, Richie, NYJ.	47	150	3.2	11	1
Harmon, Ronnie, Hou.	29	131	4.5	25	1
Galloway, Joey, Sea.	15	127	8.5	51	0
Meggett, Dave, N.E.	40	122	3.1	12	0
Chandler, Chris, Hou.	28	113	4.0	16	0
Bradley, Freddie, S.D.	32	109	3.4	17	0
Gardner, Carwell, Bal.	26	108	4.2	19	0
Broussard, Steve, Sea.	15	106	7.1	26t	1
Grier, Marrio, N.E.	27	105	3.9	26	1
Cobb, Reggie, NYJ.	25	85	3.4	9	1
Gannon, Rich, K.C.	12	81	6.8	19	0
Parmalee, Bernie, Mia.	25	80	3.2	17	0
Hastings, Andre, Pit.	4	71	17.8	37	0
Workman, Vince, Ind.	24	70	2.9	11	0
Witman, Jon, Pit.	17	69	4.1	15	0
Kelly, Jim, Buf.	19	66	3.5	22	2

RECORDS

Receptions: 101, Charley Hennigan, Houston (1964)

Yards: 1746, Charley Hennigan, Houston (1961)

Touchdowns: 18, Mark Clayton, Miami (1984)

10 + CATCHES	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Pickens, Carl, Cin.	100	1180	11.8	61t	12
Glenn, Terry, N.E.	90	1132	12.6	37t	6
Brown, Tim, Oak.	90	1104	12.3	42t	9
Martin, Tony, S.D.	85	1171	13.8	55	14
McCardell, Keenan, Jac.	85	1129	13.3	52	3
Chrebet, Wayne, NYJ.	84	909	10.8	44	3
Smith, Jimmy, Jac.	83	1244	15.0	62	7
Sharpe, Shannon, Den.	80	1062	13.3	51	10
Jackson, Michael, Bal.	76	1201	15.8	86t	14
McDuffie, O.J., Mia.	74	918	12.4	36	8
Hastings, Andre, Pit.	72	739	10.3	38	6
Reed, Andre, Buf.	66	1036	15.7	67t	6
Harrison, Marvin, Ind.	64	836	13.1	41	8
Johnson, Keyshawn, NYJ.	63	844	13.4	50	8
Alexander, Derrick, Bal.	62	1099	17.7	64t	9
Coates, Ben, N.E.	62	682	11.0	84t	9
Fletcher, Terrell, S.D.	61	476	7.8	41	2
Johnson, Charles, Pit.	60	1008	16.8	70t	3
Anders, Kimble, K.C.	60	529	8.8	45	2
Scott, Darnay, Cin.	58	833	14.4	50t	5
Galloway, Joey, Sea.	57	987	17.3	65t	7
Miller, Anthony, Den.	56	735	13.1	46	3
Faulk, Marshall, Ind.	56	428	7.6	30	0
Kinchen, Brian, Bal.	55	581	10.6	29	1
Dawkins, Sean, Ind.	54	751	13.9	42	1
Wycheck, Frank, Hou.	53	511	9.6	29	6

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AFC STATS

10 + CATCHES	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Mitchell, Pete, Jac.	52	575	11.1	30	1
Early, Quinn, Buf.	50	798	16.0	95t	4
Graham, Jeff, NYJ.	50	788	15.8	78t	6
Jefferson, Shawn, N.E.	50	771	15.4	42	4
Penn, Chris, K.C.	49	628	12.8	22	5
Sanders, Chris, Hou.	48	882	18.4	83t	4
McCaffrey, Ed, Den.	48	553	11.5	39t	7
Johnson, Lonnie, Buf.	46	457	9.9	33	0
Martin, Curtis, N.E.	46	333	7.2	41	3
Hobbs, Daryl, Oak.	44	423	9.6	29	3
Anderson, Richie, NYJ.	44	385	8.8	48	0
Jett, James, Oak.	43	601	14.0	58t	4
Blades, Brian, Sea.	43	556	12.9	80t	2
Dilger, Ken, Ind.	42	503	12.0	51	4
Harmon, Ronnie, Hou.	42	488	11.6	43	2
Jones, Charlie, S.D.	41	524	12.8	63t	4
Warren, Chris, Sea.	40	273	6.8	33	0
Davis, Willie, Hou.	39	464	11.9	49	6
Craver, Aaron, Den.	39	297	7.6	39t	1
Turner, Floyd, Bal.	38	461	12.1	27t	2
McGee, Tony, Cin.	38	446	11.7	22	4
Barnett, Fred, Mia.	36	562	15.6	66	3
Coleman, Andre, S.D.	36	486	13.5	50	2
Davis, Terrell, Den.	36	310	8.6	23	2
Russell, Derek, Hou.	34	421	12.4	29	2
Dudley, Rickey, Oak.	34	386	11.4	62t	4
Jackson, Willie, Jac.	33	486	14.7	58	3
Pritchett, Stanley, Mia.	33	354	10.7	74t	2
Meggett, Dave, N.E.	33	292	8.8	26	0
Gash, Sam, N.E.	33	276	8.4	28	2
Dunn, David, Cin.	32	509	15.9	40	1
Slaughter, Webster, NYJ.	32	434	13.6	53	2
Byars, Keith, Mia.-N.E.	32	289	9.0	27	2
Bieniemy, Eric, Cin.	32	272	8.5	42	0
Fenner, Derrick, Oak.	31	252	8.1	23t	4
Byner, Earnest, Bal.	30	270	9.0	40	1
Stewart, James, Jac.	30	177	5.9	21t	2
Drayton, Troy, St.L.-Mia.	28	331	11.8	51	0
LaChapelle, Sean, K.C.	27	422	15.6	69	2
Allen, Marcus, K.C.	27	270	10.0	59	0
Crumpler, Carlester, Sea.	26	258	9.9	26	0
Thomas, Thurman, Buf.	26	254	9.8	69	0
Morris, Bam, Bal.	25	242	9.7	52t	1
Pupunu, Alfred, S.D.	24	271	11.3	41	1
Proehl, Ricky, Sea.	23	309	13.4	56	2
George, Eddie, Hou.	23	182	7.9	17	0
Abdul-Jabbar, Karim, Mia.	23	139	6.0	23	0
Warren, Lamont, Ind.	22	174	7.9	17	0
Carter, Ki-Jana, Cin.	22	169	7.7	20	1
Kaufman, Napoleon, Oak.	22	143	6.5	19	1
Williams, Harvey, Oak.	22	143	6.5	20	0
Bettis, Jerome, Pit.	22	122	5.5	16	0
Hill, Randal, Mia.	21	409	19.5	61	4
Tasker, Steve, Buf.	21	372	17.7	62	3
Pritchard, Mike, Sea.	21	328	15.6	44	1
Vanover, Tamarick, K.C.	21	241	11.5	24	1
Brown, Troy, N.E.	21	222	10.6	38	0
Parmalee, Bernie, Mia.	21	189	9.0	17	0
McNair, Todd, K.C.	21	181	8.6	29	1
McPhail, Jerris, Mia.	20	282	14.1	52	0
Moulds, Eric, Buf.	20	279	14.0	47	2
May, Deems, S.D.	19	188	9.9	39	0
Cline, Tony, Buf.	19	117	6.2	15	1
Bailey, Aaron, Ind.	18	302	16.8	40	0
Fauria, Christian, Sea.	18	214	11.9	23t	1
Stablein, Brian, Ind.	18	192	10.7	30t	1
Johnson, Reginald, K.C.	18	189	10.5	26	1
Stewart, Kordell, Pit.	17	293	17.2	48	3
Hughes, Danan, K.C.	17	167	9.8	26	1
Brown, Derek, Jac.	17	141	8.3	16	0
Van Dyke, Alex, NYJ.	17	118	6.9	12	1
Pegram, Eric, Pit.	17	112	6.6	14	0
Murrell, Adrian, NYJ.	17	81	4.8	30	1
Smith, Rod, Den.	16	237	14.8	49t	2
Sherrard, Mike, Den.	16	185	11.6	25t	1
Holmes, Darick, Buf.	16	102	6.4	20	1
Green, Eric, Bal.	15	150	10.0	23	1
Brady, Kyle, NYJ.	15	144	9.6	25	1
Carswell, Dwayne, Den.	15	85	5.7	11	0

Cash, Keith, K.C.	14	80	5.7	20	0
Russell, Leonard, S.D.	13	180	13.8	35	0
Thomas, Rodney, Hou.	13	128	9.8	33	0
Roche, Brian, S.D.	13	111	8.5	19	0
Groce, Cliff, Ind.	13	106	8.2	24	0
Thigpen, Yancey, Pit.	12	244	20.3	39	2
Bruener, Mark, Pit.	12	141	11.8	36	0
Hearst, Garrison, Cin.	12	131	10.9	40	1
Chamberlain, Byron, Den.	12	129	10.8	17	0
Crockett, Zack, Ind.	11	96	8.7	32	1
Thomas, Lamar, Mia.	10	166	16.6	34	1
Floyd, Malcolm, Hou.	10	145	14.5	63t	1
Mitchell, Shannon, S.D.	10	57	5.7	25	0

RECORDS INTERCEPTIONS

Number: 13, Lester Hayes, Oakland (1980)
Yards: 349, Charlie McNeil, San Diego (1961)
Longest TD Return: 103 yards, Vencie Glenn, San Diego (1987); Louis Oliver, Miami (1992)
Touchdowns: 4, Ken Houston, Houston (1971); Jim Kearney, Kansas City (1972)

2 + INTERCEPTIONS	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Braxton, Tyrone, Den.	9	128	14.2	69t	1
Ambrose, Ashley, Cin.	8	63	7.9	31t	1
Buckley, Terrell, Mia.	6	164	27.3	91t	1
Woodson, Rod, Pit.	6	121	20.2	43t	1
Collins, Mark, K.C.	6	45	7.5	23	0
McDaniel, Terry, Oak.	5	150	30.0	56t	1
Williams, Darryl, Sea.	5	148	29.6	79t	1
Perry, Darren, Pit.	5	115	23.0	28	1
Lewis, Darryll, Hou.	5	103	20.6	53	1
Langham, Antonio, Bal.	5	59	11.8	28	0
Harrison, Rodney, S.D.	5	56	11.2	29	0
Spencer, Jimmy, Cin.	5	48	9.6	34	0
Turner, Eric, Bal.	5	1	0.2	1	0
Glenn, Aaron, NYJ.	4	113	28.3	100t	2
Belser, Jason, Ind.	4	81	20.3	44t	2
Clay, Willie, N.E.	4	50	12.5	35	0
Robertson, Marcus, Hou.	4	44	11.0	27	0
Tovar, Steve, Cin.	4	42	10.5	24	0
Schulz, Kurt, Buf.	4	24	6.0	19	0
Kirkland, Levon, Pit.	4	12	3.0	6	0
Oliver, Louis, Mia.	3	110	36.7	60	0
Jackson, Calvin, Mia.	3	82	27.3	61t	1
Shaw, Terrance, S.D.	3	78	26.0	36	0
Lynch, Lorenzo, Oak.	3	75	25.0	35	0
Thomas, Zach, Mia.	3	64	21.3	27	1
Francis, James, Cin.	3	61	20.3	42t	1
Blackmon, Robert, Sea.	3	48	16.0	38	0
Law, Ty, N.E.	3	45	15.0	38t	1
Gouveia, Kurt, S.D.	3	41	13.7	21	0
Washington, Brian, K.C.	3	39	13.0	34	0
Daniel, Eugene, Ind.	3	35	11.7	35t	1
Bellamy, Jay, Sea.	3	18	6.0	16	0
Carter, Dale, K.C.	3	17	5.7	17	0
Atwater, Steve, Den.	3	11	3.7	11	0
Romanowski, Bill, Den.	3	1	0.3	1	0
Clark, Willie, S.D.	2	83	41.5	83t	1
Gordon, Darrien, S.D.	2	55	27.5	55	0
Davis, Anthony, K.C.	2	37	18.5	30	0
Martin, Emanuel, Buf.	2	35	17.5	31	0
Walker, Brace, Cin.	2	35	17.5	35	0
Crockett, Ray, Den.	2	34	17.0	34	0
Buchanan, Ray, Ind.	2	32	16.0	32	0
Green, Victor, NYJ.	2	27	13.5	18	0
Hudson, Chris, Jac.	2	25	12.5	21	0
Brown, Chad, Pit.	2	20	10.0	16	0
Smith, Otis, N.E.	2	20	10.0	11	0
Hardy, Kevin, Jac.	2	19	9.5	13	0
Seau, Junior, S.D.	2	18	9.0	10	0
Washington, Lionel, Den.	2	17	8.5	23	0
James, Tory, Den.	2	15	7.5	15	0
Wooden, Shawn, Mia.	2	15	7.5	15	0
Hitchcock, Jimmy, N.E.	2	14	7.0	14	0
Milloy, Lawyer, N.E.	2	14	7.0	14	0
Figures, Deon, Pit.	2	13	6.5	13	0
Morton, Mike, Oak.	2	13	6.5	13	0
Myers, Greg, Cin.	2	10	5.0	10	0
Henderson, Jerome, N.E.	2	7	3.5	7	0
Reynolds, Ricky, N.E.	2	7	3.5	7	0
Ross, Kevin, S.D.	2	7	3.5	7	0

Thomas, Dave, Jac.	2	7	3.5	8	0
Houston, Bobby, NYJ.	2	3	1.5	3	0
Jones, Rod W., Cin.	2	2	1.0	2	0
Davis, Travis, Jac.	2	0	0.0	0	0
Lewis, Albert, Oak.	2	0	0.0	0	0
Orlando, Bo, Cin.	2	0	0.0	0	0
Sawyer, Corey, Cin.	2	0	0.0	0	0
Stevens, Matt, Buf.	2	0	0.0	0	0

RECORDS KICK RETURNS

Number: 62, Andre Coleman, San Diego (1995)
Yards: 1411, Andre Coleman, San Diego (1995)
Longest TD: 106 yards, Noland Smith, Kansas City (1967)
Touchdowns: 3, Raymond Clayborn, New England (1977)

20 + RETURNS	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Vanover, Tamarick, K.C.	33	854	25.9	97t	1
Gray, Mel, Hou.	50	1224	24.5	88	0
Hebron, Vaughn, Den.	45	1099	24.4	59	0
Spikes, Irving, Mia.	28	681	24.3	59	0
Bailey, Aaron, Ind.	43	1041	24.2	95t	1
Woods, Jerome, K.C.	25	581	23.2	66	0
Moulds, Eric, Buf.	52	1205	23.2	97t	1
Meggett, Dave, N.E.	34	781	23.0	54	0
Broussard, Steve, Sea.	43	979	22.8	86	0
Dunn, David, Cin.	35	782	22.3	90t	1
Coleman, Andre, S.D.	55	1210	22.0	57	0
Kaufman, Napoleon, Oak.	25	548	21.9	39	0
Brown, Troy, N.E.	29	634	21.9	51	0
Lewis, Jermaine, Bal.	41	883	21.5	44	0
Kidd, Carl, Oak.	29	622	21.4	48	0
Jordan, Randy, Jac.	26	553	21.3	73	0
Cobb, Reggie, NYJ.	23	488	21.2	34	0
Baldwin, Randy, Bal.	20	405	20.3	34	0
Bailey, Henry, NYJ.	24	470	19.6	34	0

RECORDS PUNT RETURNS

Number: 62, Fulton Walker, Miami-L.A. Raiders (1985)
Yards: 692, Fulton Walker, Miami-L.A. Raiders (1985)
Longest: 98 yards, Terance Mathis, N.Y. Jets (1990)

20 + RETURNS	NO	FC	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Gordon, Darrien, S.D.	36	13	537	14.9	81t	1
Smith, Rod, Den.	23	15	283	12.3	36	0
Kinchen, Todd, Den.	26	4	300	11.5	40	0
Meggett, Dave, N.E.	52	9	588	11.3	60t	1
Hudson, Chris, Jac.	32	12	348	10.9	60	0
Burris, Jeff, Buf.	27	7	286	10.6	45	0
McDuffie, O.J., Mia.	22	24	212	9.6	19	0
Lewis, Jermaine, Bal.	36	13	339	9.4	46	0
Gray, Mel, Hou.	22	15	205	9.3	40	0
Brown, Tim, Oak.	32	21	272	8.5	36	0
Hastings, Andre, Pit.	37	12	242	6.5	33	0
Chrebet, Wayne, NYJ.	28	16	139	5.0	15	0

RECORDS SACKS

Number: 22, Mark Gastineau, N.Y. Jets (1984)

4.5 + SACKS	NO		NO
McCrary, M., Sea.	13.5	Wilkinson, D., Cin.	6.5
Smith, B., Buf.	13.5	Barrow, M., Hou.	6.0
Brown, C., Pit.	13.0	Bennett, T., Ind.	6.0
Sinclair, M., Sea.	13.0	Mims, C., S.D.	6.0
Thomas, D., K.C.	13.0	Paup, B., Buf.	6.0
Williams, A., Den.	13.0	Smith, N., K.C.	6.0
Armstrong, T., Mia.	12.0	Swilling, P., Oak.	6.0
McGinest, W., N.E.	9.5	Adams, S., Sea.	5.5
Stubbs, D., Mia.	9.0	Hardy, K., Jac.	5.5
Douglas, H., NYJ.	8.0	Walker, G., Hou.	5.5
Hansen, P., Buf.	8.0	Geathers, J., Den.	5.0
Kennedy, C., Sea.	8.0	Jeffcoat, J., Buf.	5.0
McGlockton, C., Oak.	8.0	McCoy, T., Ind.	5.0
Cook, A., Hou.	7.5	McDonald, R., Cin.	5.0
Simmons, C., Jac.	7.5	Northern, G., Buf.	5.0
Brackens, T., Jac.	7.0	Smeenge, J., Jac.	5.0
Gildon, J., Pit.	7.0	Tanavasa, M., Den.	5.0
Seau, J., S.D.	7.0	Caldwell, M., Bal.	4.5
Slade, C., N.E.	7.0	Hamilton, B., NYJ.	4.5
Dent, R., Ind.	6.5	Lageman, J., Jac.	4.5

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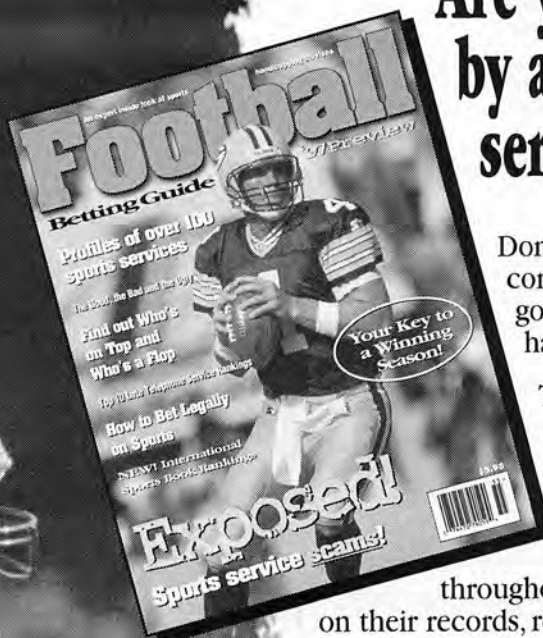
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NFC STATS

RECORDS

Points: 541, Washington (1983)

TEAM	TD	TOR	TOP	TOM	XP	2PT	FG	FGA	SAF	POINTS
Green Bay	56	9	39	8	51	2	21	27	1	456
San Francisco	43	17	24	2	40	1	30	34	4	398
Carolina	36	9	22	5	34	1	37	45	2	367
Washington	41	27	12	2	40	0	26	32	0	364
Philadelphia	41	16	19	6	40	0	25	29	1	363
Atlanta	35	9	26	0	31	1	22	29	0	309
St. Louis	34	10	18	6	30	2	21	25	1	303
Detroit	38	15	20	3	36	1	12	17	0	302
Arizona	33	8	23	2	29	2	23	31	0	300
Minnesota	33	7	24	2	30	2	22	29	0	298
Dallas	27	14	12	1	24	2	32	36	0	286
Chicago	31	9	19	3	26	0	23	30	1	283
NY Giants	24	4	14	6	22	0	24	27	2	242
New Orleans	24	10	13	1	18	2	21	25	0	229
Tampa Bay	21	8	12	1	18	1	25	32	0	221
NFC Average	34.5	11.5	19.8	3.2	31.3	1.1	24.3	29.9	0.8	314.7

RECORDS

Completions: 377, Warren Moon, Minnesota (1995)

Touchdowns: 39, Brett Favre, Green Bay (1996)

Yards: 4614, Neil Lomax, St. Louis (1984)

Longest TD: 99 yards, Frank Filchock to Andy Farkas, Washington (1939); George Izo to Bobby Mitchell, Washington (1963); Karl Sweetan to Pat Studstill, Detroit (1966); Sonny Jurgensen to Jerry Allen, Washington (1968); Ron Jaworski to Mike Quick, Philadelphia (1985); Brett Favre to Robert Brooks, Green Bay (1995)

224 + ATTEMPTS	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	AVG	TD	TD%	LONG	INT	INT%	SACKS	LOSS	RATING
Young, Steve, S.F.	316	214	67.7	2410	7.63	14	4.4	52	6	1.9	34	160	97.2
Favre, Brett, G.B.	543	325	59.9	3899	7.18	39	7.2	80t	13	2.4	40	241	95.8
Johnson, Brad, Min.	311	195	62.7	2258	7.26	17	5.5	82t	10	3.2	15	119	89.4
Detmer, Ty, Phi.	401	238	59.4	2911	7.26	15	3.7	42	13	3.2	27	171	80.8
Aikman, Troy, Dal.	465	296	63.7	3126	6.72	12	2.6	61	13	2.8	18	120	80.1
Collins, Kerry, Car.	364	204	56.0	2454	6.74	14	3.8	55	9	2.5	18	114	79.4
Frerotte, Gus, Was.	470	270	57.4	3453	7.35	12	2.6	52t	11	2.3	22	134	79.3
Krieg, Dave, Chi.	377	226	59.9	2278	6.04	14	3.7	53t	12	3.2	14	104	76.3
Graham, Kent, Ari.	274	146	53.3	1624	5.93	12	4.4	69	7	2.6	19	120	75.1
Mitchell, Scott, Det.	437	253	57.9	2917	6.68	17	3.9	62t	17	3.9	36	199	74.9
Hebert, Bobby, Atl.	488	294	60.2	3152	6.46	22	4.5	57	25	5.1	27	150	72.9
Banks, Tony, St.L.	368	192	52.2	2544	6.91	15	4.1	77t	15	4.1	48	306	71.0
Esiason, Boomer, Ari.	339	190	56.0	2293	6.76	11	3.2	64t	14	4.1	17	109	70.6
Everett, Jim, N.O.	464	267	57.5	2797	6.03	12	2.6	51	16	3.4	19	154	69.4
Moon, Warren, Min.	247	134	54.3	1610	6.52	7	2.8	54t	9	3.6	19	122	68.7
Dilfer, Trent, T.B.	482	267	55.4	2859	5.93	12	2.5	45	19	3.9	28	207	64.8
Brown, Dave, NYG.	398	214	53.8	2412	6.06	12	3.0	37t	20	5.0	49	276	61.3

RECORDS

Number: 114, Bob Parsons, Chicago (1981)

Average: 51.4 yards, Sammy Baugh, Washington (1940)

Longest: 94 yards, Joe Lintzenich, Chicago (1931)

40 + PUNTS	NO	YARDS	LONG	AVG	TB	BLK	OPP RET	RET YDS	IN 20	NET AVG
Turk, Matt, Was.	75	3386	63	45.1	11	0	34	224	24	39.2
Landeta, Sean, St.L.	78	3491	70	44.8	9	0	41	495	23	36.1
Sauerbrun, Todd, Chi.	78	3491	72	44.8	12	0	42	527	15	34.9
Thompson, Tommy, S.F.	73	3217	65	44.1	6	2	36	235	20	38.2
Feagles, Jeff, Ari.	76	3328	68	43.8	6	1	37	403	23	36.4
Royals, Mark, Det.	69	3020	60	43.8	8	1	42	519	11	33.4
Barnhardt, Tommy, T.B.	70	3015	62	43.1	4	1	38	248	24	37.8
Jett, John, Dal.	74	3150	60	42.6	9	0	32	249	22	36.8
Hutton, Tom, Phi.	73	3107	60	42.6	9	1	36	330	17	35.1
Hentrich, Craig, G.B.	68	2886	65	42.4	9	0	29	237	28	36.3
Horan, Mike, NYG.	102	4289	63	42.0	10	0	45	432	32	35.9
Stryzinski, Dan, Atl.	75	3152	58	42.0	4	0	32	413	22	35.5
Berger, Mitch, Min.	88	3616	63	41.1	6	2	37	577	26	32.4
Wilmsmeyer, Klaus, N.O.	87	3551	63	40.8	9	0	43	546	16	32.5
Stark, Rohn, Car.	77	3128	60	40.6	9	0	32	173	21	36.0

t = touchdown

TEAM SCORING

RECORDS

Points: 176, Paul Hornung, Green Bay (1960)

Field Goals: 37, John Kasay, Carolina (1996)

Extra Points: 62, Mark Moseley, Washington (1983)

KICKERS	XP	XPA	FG	FGA	PTS
Kasay, John, Car.	34	35	37	45	145
Wilkins, Jeff, S.F.	40	40	30	34	130
Bonioli, Chris, Dal.	24	25	32	36	120
Blanton, Scott, Was.	40	40	26	32	118
Anderson, Gary, Phi.	40	40	25	29	115
Jacke, Chris, G.B.	51	53	21	27	114
Andersen, Morten, Atl.	31	31	22	29	97
Sisson, Scott, Min.	30	30	22	29	96
Daluiso, Brad, NYG	22	22	24	27	94
Husted, Michael, T.B.	18	19	25	32	93
Lohmiller, Chip, St.L.	28	29	21	25	91
Brien, Doug, N.O.	18	18	21	25	81
Jaeger, Jeff, Chi.	23	23	19	23	80
Hanson, Jason, Det.	36	36	12	17	72
Butler, Kevin, Ari.	17	19	14	17	59
Davis, Greg, Ari.	12	12	9	14	39
Huerta, Carlos, Chi.-St.L.	5	5	4	7	17

RECORDS

Touchdowns: 25, Emmitt Smith, Dallas (1995)

NON-KICKERS	TD	TOR	TOP	TOM	2PT	PTS
Allen, Terry, Was.	21	21	0	0	0	126
Smith, Emmitt, Dal.	15	12	3	0	0	90
Watters, Ricky, Phi.	13	13	0	0	0	78
Fryar, Irving, Phi.	11	0	11	0	0	66
Kennison, Eddie, St.L.	11	0	9	2	0	66
Sanders, Barry, Det.	11	11	0	0	0	66
Carter, Cris, Min.	10	0	10	0	0	60
Jackson, Keith, G.B.	10	0	10	0	0	60
Levens, Dorsey, G.B.	10	5	5	0	0	60
Walls, Wesley, Car.	10	0	10	0	0	60
Moore, Herman, Det.	9	0	9	0	1	56
Centers, Larry, Ari.	9	2	7	0	0	54
Freeman, Antonio, G.B.	9	0	9	0	0	54
Rice, Jerry, S.F.	9	1	8	0	0	54
Mathis, Terance, Atl.	7	0	7	0	1	44
Bruce, Isaac, St.L.	7	0	7	0	0	42
Conway, Curtis, Chi.	7	0	7	0	0	42
Reed, Jake, Min.	7	0	7	0	0	42
Alstott, Mike, T.B.	6	3	3	0	0	36
Anderson, Jamal, Atl.	6	5	1	0	0	36
Beebe, Don, G.B.	6	0	4	2	0	36
Carrier, Mark, Car.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Emanuel, Bert, Atl.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Engram, Bobby, Chi.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Johnson, Anthony, Car.	6	6	0	0	0	36
Metcalfe, Eric, Atl.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Morton, Johnnie, Det.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Popson, Ted, S.F.	6	0	6	0	0	36
Green, Harold, St.L.	5	4	1	0	1	32
Harris, Raymond, Chi.	5	4	1	0	0	30
Jones, Chris T., Phi.	5	0	5	0	0	30
Perriman, Brett, Det.	5	0	5	0	0	30
Phillips, Lawrence, St.L.	5	4	1	0	0	30
Shepherd, Leslie, Was.	5	2	3	0	0	30
Haynes, Michael, N.O.	4	0	4	0	1	26
Moore, Rob, Ari.	4	0	4	0	1	26
Young, Steve, S.F.	4	4	0	0	1	26
Asher, Jamie, Was.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Bates, Mario, N.O.	4	4	0	0	0	24
Brooks, Robert, G.B.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Calloway, Chris, NYG.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Johnson, LeShon, Ari.	4	3	1	0	0	24
Kirby, Terry, S.F.	4	3	1	0	0	24
Lewis, Thomas, NYG.	4	0	4	0	0	24

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NFC STATS

NON-KICKERS	TD	TOR	TDP	TDM	2PT	PTS
Loville, Derek, S.F.	4	2	2	0	0	24
Mitchell, Scott, Det.	4	4	0	0	0	24
Owens, Terrell, S.F.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Rhett, Errict, T.B.	4	3	1	0	0	24
Salaam, Rashaan, Chi.	4	3	1	0	0	24
Sanders, Frank, Ari.	4	0	4	0	0	24
Zellars, Ray, N.O.	4	4	0	0	0	24
Bennett, Edgar, G.B.	3	2	1	0	2	22
Bjornson, Eric, Dal.	3	0	3	0	1	20
Floyd, William, S.F.	3	2	1	0	0	18
Green, Willie, Car.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Heyward, Craig, Atl.	3	3	0	0	0	18
Hoard, Leroy, Min.	3	3	0	0	0	18
Howard, Desmond, G.B.	3	0	0	3	0	18
Ismail, Qadry, Min.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Jeffries, Haywood, N.O.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Moore, Dave, T.B.	3	0	3	0	0	18
Small, Torrance, N.O.	3	1	2	0	0	18
Smith, Robert, Min.	3	3	0	0	0	18
Wheatley, Tyrone, NYG.	3	1	2	0	0	18
Irvine, Michael, Dal.	2	0	2	0	1	14
Birden, J.J., Atl.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Brooks, Reggie, T.B.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Davis, Stephen, Was.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Dowdell, Marcus, Ari.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Dunn, Jason, Phi.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Ellard, Henry, Was.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Favre, Brett, G.B.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Galbraith, Scott, Was.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Grbac, Elvis, S.F.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Griffith, Howard, Car.	2	1	1	0	0	12
Lee, Amp, Min.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Logan, Marc, Was.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Mayes, Derrick, G.B.	2	0	2	0	0	12
McElroy, Leeland, Ari.	2	1	1	0	0	12
Mickens, Terry, G.B.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Neal, Lorenzo, N.O.	2	1	1	0	0	12
Parker, Anthony, St.L.	2	0	0	2	0	12
Pierce, Aaron, NYG.	2	1	1	0	0	12
Sanders, Deion, Dal.	2	0	1	1	0	12
Smith, Cedric, Ari.	2	1	1	0	0	12
Thomas, Robb, T.B.	2	0	2	0	0	12
Toomer, Amani, NYG.	2	0	0	2	0	12
Vardell, Tommy, S.F.	2	2	0	0	0	12
Way, Charles, NYG.	2	1	1	0	0	12
Witherspoon, Derrick, Phi.	2	0	0	2	0	12
Eslason, Boomer, Ari.	1	1	0	0	1	8
Harris, Jackie, T.B.	1	0	1	0	1	8
Walsh, Chris, Min.	1	0	1	0	1	8
Wooten, Tito, NYG.	1	0	0	1	0	*8
Agnew, Ray, NYG.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Aikman, Troy, Dal.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Bates, Michael, Car.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Blades, Bennie, Det.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Brown, Tyrone, Atl.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Butler, LeRoy, G.B.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Carter, Dexter, S.F.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Carter, Pat, Ari.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Cox, Bryan, Chi.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Cross, Howard, NYG.	1	0	1	0	0	6
DeRamus, Lee, N.O.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Detmer, Ty, Phi.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Doleman, Chris, S.F.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Douglas, Maurice, NYG.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Edwards, Anthony, Ari.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Evans, Doug, G.B.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Faulkerson, Mike, Chi.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Flanigan, Jim, Chi.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Frisch, David, Min.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Garner, Charlie, Phi.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Green, Darrell, Was.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Greene, Kevin, Car.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Greene, Scott, Car.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Guess, Terry, N.O.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Hall, Rhett, Phi.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Hampton, Rodney, NYG.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Harper, Alvin, T.B.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Hawkins, Courtney, T.B.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Hebert, Bobby, Atl.	1	1	0	0	0	6

Henderson, William, G.B.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Ismail, Raghib, Car.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Johnson, Brad, Min.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Johnson, Tony, N.O.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Johnston, Daryl, Dal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Jones, Brent, S.F.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Jones, Brian, N.O.	1	0	0	1	0	6
King, Shawn, Car.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Koonce, George, G.B.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Kozlowski, Brian, NYG.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Krieg, Dave, Chi.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Lowery, Michael, Chi.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Lyght, Todd, St.L.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Lyons, Mitch, Atl.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Mamula, Mike, Phi.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Martin, Kelvin, Dal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Matthews, Shane, Chi.	1	1	0	0	0	6
McWilliams, Johnny, Ari.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Miller, Jamir, Ari.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Mills, Sam, Car.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Muhammad, Muhsin, Car.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Oliver, Winslow, Car.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Palmer, David, Min.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Peete, Rodney, Phi.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Philyaw, Dino, Car.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Pope, Marquez, S.F.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Preston, Roell, Atl.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Raymond, Corey, Det.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Rison, Andre, G.B.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Robinson, Greg, St.L.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Ross, Jermaine, St.L.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Sehorn, Jason, NYG.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Spears, Marcus, Chi.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Thomas, William, Phi.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Toback, Robbie, Atl.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Turner, Kevin, Phi.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Turner, Scott, Was.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Uwaezuoke, Iheanyi, S.F.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Vincent, Troy, Phi.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Walker, Herschel, Dal.	1	1	0	0	0	6
Washington, Dewayne, Min.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Wells, Mike, Det.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Westbrook, Michael, Was.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Wetnight, Ryan, Chi.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Williams, Aeneas, Ari.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Williams, Karl, T.B.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Williams, Kevin, Dal.	1	0	1	0	0	6
Woolford, Donnell, Chi.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Wright, Toby, St.L.	1	0	0	1	0	6
Young, Bryant, S.F.	0	0	0	0	0	*4
Banks, Tony, St.L.	0	0	0	0	1	2
Collins, Kerry, Car.	0	0	0	0	1	2
Jordan, Andrew, Min.	0	0	0	0	1	2
Wilmsmeyer, Klaus, N.O.	0	0	0	0	1	2

* Safety

RECORDS

Carries: 407, James Wilder, Tampa Bay (1984)
Yards: 2105, Eric Dickerson, L.A. Rams (1984)
Touchdowns: 25, Emmitt Smith, Dallas (1995)

50 + YARDS

	ATT	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Sanders, Barry, Det.	307	1553	5.1	54t	11
Watters, Ricky, Phi.	353	1411	4.0	56t	13
Allen, Terry, Was.	347	1353	3.9	49t	21
Smith, Emmitt, Dal.	327	1204	3.7	42	12
Johnson, Anthony, Car.	300	1120	3.7	29	6
Anderson, Jamal, Atl.	232	1055	4.5	32t	5
Bennett, Edgar, G.B.	222	899	4.0	23	2
Hampton, Rodney, NYG.	254	827	3.3	25	1
Harris, Raymond, Chi.	194	748	3.9	23	4
Smith, Robert, Min.	162	692	4.3	57	3
Johnson, LeShon, Ari.	141	634	4.5	70t	3
Phillips, Lawrence, St.L.	193	632	3.3	38	4
Bates, Mario, N.O.	164	584	3.6	33	4
Levens, Dorsey, G.B.	121	566	4.7	24	5
Kirby, Terry, S.F.	134	559	4.2	31	3
Rhett, Errict, T.B.	176	539	3.1	35	3
Green, Harold, St.L.	127	523	4.1	35t	4
Salaam, Rashaan, Chi.	143	496	3.5	32	3
Hoard, Leroy, Bal.-Car.-Min.	125	492	3.9	25	3
Zellars, Ray, N.O.	120	475	4.0	63	4

RUSHING

Centers, Larry, Ari.	116	425	3.7	24	2
Wheatley, Tyrone, NYG.	112	400	3.6	37	1
Alstott, Mike, T.B.	96	377	3.9	39	3
Brooks, Reggie, T.B.	112	368	3.3	56	2
Garner, Charlie, Phi.	66	346	5.2	46	1
Heyward, Craig, Atl.	72	321	4.5	34	3
Young, Steve, S.F.	52	310	6.0	33	4
McElroy, Leeland, Ari.	89	305	3.4	32	1
Williams, Sherman, Dal.	69	269	3.9	27	0
Green, Robert, Chi.	60	249	4.2	19	0
Biakabutuka, Tim, Car.	71	229	3.2	17	0
Loville, Derek, S.F.	70	229	3.3	16	2
Banks, Tony, St.L.	61	212	3.5	22	0
Mitchell, Brian, Was.	39	193	4.9	32	0
Vardell, Tommy, S.F.	58	192	3.3	17	2
Floyd, William, S.F.	47	186	4.0	12	2
Oliver, Winslow, Car.	47	183	3.9	16	0
Brown, Dave, NYG.	50	170	3.4	18	0
Lynn, Anthony, S.F.	24	164	6.8	67	0
Lee, Amp, Min.	51	161	3.2	12	0
Davis, Stephen, Was.	23	139	6.0	39t	2
Graham, Scottie, Min.	57	138	2.4	12	0
Favre, Brett, G.B.	49	136	2.8	23	2
Robinson, Greg, St.L.	32	134	4.2	24	1
Henderson, William, G.B.	39	130	3.3	14	0
Difler, Trent, T.B.	32	124	3.9	19	0
Logan, Marc, Was.	20	111	5.6	36t	2
Ellison, Jerry, T.B.	35	106	3.0	13	0
Jervy, Travis, G.B.	26	106	4.1	12	0
Shepherd, Leslie, Was.	6	96	16.0	32t	2
Downs, Gary, NYG.	29	94	3.2	27	0
Hicks, Michael, Chi.	27	92	3.4	23	0
Johnson, Brad, Min.	34	90	2.6	13	1
Graham, Kent, Ari.	21	87	4.1	19	0
Rivers, Ron, Det.	19	86	4.5	26	0
Mitchell, Scott, Det.	37	83	2.2	9	4
Walker, Herschel, Dal.	10	83	8.3	39t	1
Ismail, Raghib, Car.	8	80	10.0	35t	1
Way, Charles, NYG.	22	79	3.6	18	1
Rice, Jerry, S.F.	11	77	7.0	38	1
Carter, Dexter, S.F.	19	66	3.5	18	1
Detmer, Ty, Phi.	31	59	1.9	9	1
Hebert, Bobby, Atl.	15	59	3.9	25	1
Neal, Lorenzo, N.O.	21	58	2.8	11	1
Eslason, Boomer, Ari.	15	52	3.5	13	1
Whittle, Ricky, N.O.	20	52	2.6	15	0
Small, Torrance, N.O.	4	51	12.8	22	1
Conway, Curtis, Chi.	8	50	6.3	19	0

RECORDS

Receptions: 123, Herman Moore, Detroit (1995)
Yards: 1848, Jerry Rice, S.F. (1995)
Touchdowns: 22, Jerry Rice, S.F. (1987)

10 + CATCHES

	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Rice, Jerry, S.F.	108	1254	11.6	39	8
Moore, Herman, Det.	106	1296	12.2	50t	9
Centers, Larry, Ari.	99	766	7.7	39	7
Carter, Cris, Min.	96	1163	12.1	43t	10
Perriman, Brett, Det.	94	1021	10.9	44	5
Fryar, Irving, Phi.	88	1195	13.6	42	11
Bruce, Isaac, St.L.	84	1338	15.9	70	7
Conway, Curtis, Chi.	81	1049	13.0	58t	7
Emanuel, Bert, Atl.	75	921	12.3	53	6
Reed, Jake, Min.	72	1320	18.3	82t	7
Jones, Chris T., Phi.	70	859	12.3	38	5
Sanders, Frank, Ari.	69	813	11.8	34	4
Mathis, Terance, Atl.	69	771	11.2	55	7
Alstott, Mike, T.B.	65	557	8.6	29	3
Irvin, Michael, Dal.	64	962	15.0	61	2
Timpson, Michael, Chi.	62	802	12.9	49	0
Walls, Wesley, Car.	61	713	11.7	40t	10
Moore, Rob, Ari.	58	1016	17.5	69	4
Carrier, Mark, Car.	58	808	13.9	39	6
Freeman, Antonio, G.B.	56	933	16.7	51t	9
Morton, Johnnie, Det.	55	714	13.0	62t	6
Kennison, Eddie, St.L.	54	924	17.1	77t	9
Metcalf, Eric, Atl.	54	599	11.1	67	6
Lee, Amp, Min.	54	422	7.8	21	2
Calloway, Chris, NYG.	53	739	13.9	36	4
Lewis, Thomas, NYG.	53	694	13.1	34	4
Ellard, Henry, Was.	52	1014	19.5	51	2

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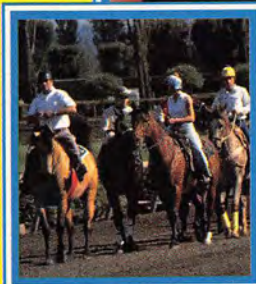


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NFC STATS

10 + CATCHES	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Kirby, Terry, S.F.	52	439	8.4	52	1
Watters, Ricky, Phi.	51	444	8.7	36	0
Small, Torrance, N.O.	50	558	11.2	41	2
Anderson, Jamal, Atl.	49	473	9.7	34	1
Bjornson, Eric, Dal.	48	388	8.1	25	3
Rison, Andre, Jac.-G.B.	47	593	12.6	61t	3
Smith, Emmitt, Dal.	47	249	5.3	21	3
Green, Willie, Car.	46	614	13.3	50	3
Hawkins, Courtney, T.B.	46	544	11.8	45	1
Haynes, Michael, N.O.	44	786	17.9	51	4
Turner, Kevin, Phi.	43	409	9.5	41	1
Johnston, Daryl, Dal.	43	278	6.5	23	1
Asher, Jamie, Was.	42	481	11.5	34	4
Carter, Tony, Chi.	41	233	5.7	29	0
Jackson, Keith, G.B.	40	505	12.6	51t	10
Beebe, Don, G.B.	39	699	17.9	80t	4
Green, Harold, St.L.	37	246	6.6	19	1
Sanders, Deion, Dal.	36	475	13.2	41	1
Owens, Terrell, S.F.	35	520	14.9	46t	4
Westbrook, Michael, Was.	34	505	14.9	45	1
Jones, Brent, S.F.	33	428	13.0	39	1
Thomas, Robb, T.B.	33	427	12.9	31t	2
Engram, Bobby, Chi.	33	389	11.8	24	6
Way, Charles, NYG.	32	328	10.3	37t	1
Harris, Raymont, Chi.	32	296	9.3	47	1
Mitchell, Brian, Was.	32	286	8.9	20	0
Allen, Terry, Was.	32	194	6.1	28	0
Levens, Dorsey, G.B.	31	226	7.3	49	5
Neal, Lorenzo, N.O.	31	194	6.3	23	1
Bennett, Edgar, G.B.	31	176	5.7	25t	1
Harris, Jackie, T.B.	30	349	11.6	36	1
Birden, J.J., Atl.	30	319	10.6	57	2
Edwards, Anthony, Ari.	29	311	10.7	31	1
Chmura, Mark, G.B.	28	370	13.2	29	0
Brown, Tyrone, Atl.	28	325	11.6	38	1
Vardell, Tommy, S.F.	28	179	6.4	22	0
Williams, Kevin, Dal.	27	323	12.0	31	1
Moore, Dave, T.B.	27	237	8.8	23	3
Griffith, Howard, Car.	27	223	8.3	21	1
Lusk, Henry, N.O.	27	210	7.8	24	0
Henderson, William, G.B.	27	203	7.5	27	1
Carter, Pat, Ari.	26	329	12.7	36	1
Popson, Ted, S.F.	26	301	11.6	39t	6
Floyd, William, S.F.	26	197	7.6	24	1
Johnson, Anthony, Car.	26	192	7.4	55	0
Whittle, Ricky, N.O.	26	162	6.2	28	0
Muhammad, Muhsin, Car.	25	407	16.3	54t	1
Martin, Kelvin, Dal.	25	380	15.2	60t	1
Sanders, Barry, Det.	24	147	6.1	28	0
Brooks, Robert, G.B.	23	344	15.0	38	4
Shepherd, Leslie, Was.	23	344	15.0	52t	3
Logan, Marc, Was.	23	269	11.7	26	0
Ismail, Qadry, Min.	22	351	16.0	54t	3
Williams, Karl, T.B.	22	246	11.2	25	0
Cross, Howard, NYG.	22	178	8.1	19	1
Evans, Chuck, Min.	22	135	6.1	16	0
Wetnight, Ryan, Chi.	21	223	10.6	38	1
Preston, Roell, Atl.	21	208	9.9	17t	1
Dowdell, Marcus, Ari.	20	318	15.9	64t	2
Jeffries, Haywood, N.O.	20	215	10.8	27t	3
Harper, Alvin, T.B.	19	289	15.2	40t	1
Seay, Mark, Phi.	19	260	13.7	35	0
Jordan, Andrew, Min.	19	128	6.7	15	0
Stokes, J.J., S.F.	18	249	13.8	40	0
Dawsey, Lawrence, NYG.	18	233	12.9	28	0
Ellison, Jerry, T.B.	18	208	11.6	42	0
Hunter, Ernest, Bal.-N.O.	18	163	9.1	25	0
Mickens, Terry, G.B.	18	161	8.9	19	2
Brooks, Bill, Was.	17	224	13.2	31	0
Metzelaars, Pete, Det.	17	146	8.6	20	0
Heyward, Craig, Atl.	16	168	10.5	25	0
Loville, Derek, S.F.	16	138	8.6	44t	2
Dunn, Jason, Phi.	15	332	22.1	58	2
DeRamus, Lee, N.O.	15	182	12.1	28t	1
Johnson, LeShon, Ari.	15	176	11.7	35	1
Conwell, Ernie, St.L.	15	164	10.9	26	0
Ross, Jermaine, St.L.	15	160	10.7	28	0
Oliver, Winslow, Car.	15	144	9.6	29	0
Smith, Irv, N.O.	15	144	9.6	37	0

Williams, Calvin, Bal.-Phi.	15	93	6.2	19	1
Hampton, Rodney, NYG.	15	82	5.5	16	0
Garner, Charlie, Phi.	14	92	6.6	13	0
Laing, Aaron, St.L.	13	116	8.9	22	0
Howard, Desmond, G.B.	13	95	7.3	12	0
Green, Robert, Chi.	13	78	6.0	18	0
Bates, Mario, N.O.	13	44	3.4	15	0
Ismail, Raghib, Car.	12	214	17.8	51	0
Wheatley, Tyrone, NYG.	12	51	4.3	13	2
Pierce, Aaron, NYG.	11	144	13.1	30	1
Hoard, Leroy, Bal.-Min.	11	133	12.1	37	0

RECORDS INTERCEPTIONS

Number: 14, Dick Lane, Los Angeles (1952)
Yards: 303, Deion Sanders, San Francisco (1994)
Longest TD Return: 102 yards, Bob Smith, Detroit (1949);
 Erich Barnes, N.Y. Giants (1961)
Touchdowns: 4, Eric Allen, Philadelphia (1993)

2 + INTERCEPTIONS	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Lyle, Keith, St.L.	9	152	16.9	68	0
Robinson, Eugene, G.B.	6	107	17.8	39	0
Pope, Marquez, S.F.	6	98	16.3	55t	1
Williams, Aeneas, Ari.	6	89	14.8	65t	1
Woolford, Donnell, Chi.	6	37	6.2	28t	1
Butler, LeRoy, G.B.	5	149	29.8	90t	1
Evans, Doug, G.B.	5	102	20.4	63	1
Cota, Chad, Car.	5	63	12.6	35	0
Sehorn, Jason, NYG.	5	61	12.2	24	1
Davis, Eric, Car.	5	57	11.4	36	0
Thomas, Orlando, Min.	5	57	11.4	34	0
Smith, Kevin, Dal.	5	45	9.0	24	0
Lyght, Todd, St.L.	5	43	8.6	25t	1
Woodson, Darren, Dal.	5	43	8.6	21	0
Abraham, Donnie, T.B.	5	27	5.4	21	0
Carter, Tom, Was.	5	24	4.8	24	0
McNeil, Ryan, Det.	5	14	2.8	15	0
Parker, Anthony, St.L.	4	128	32.0	92t	2
Griffith, Robert, Min.	4	67	16.8	41	0
Zordich, Mike, Phi.	4	54	13.5	28	0
Teague, George, Dal.	4	47	11.8	22	0
Hanks, Merton, S.F.	4	7	1.8	8	0
Vincent, Troy, Phi.	3	144	48.0	90t	1
Green, Darrell, Was.	3	84	28.0	68t	1
Koonce, George, G.B.	3	84	28.0	75t	1
Ellsworth, Percy, NYG.	3	62	20.7	33	0
Richard, Stanley, Was.	3	47	15.7	42	0
Thomas, William, Phi.	3	47	15.7	37	0
Dawkins, Brian, Phi.	3	41	13.7	30	0
Newman, Anthony, N.O.	3	40	13.3	21	0
Carter, Marty, Chi.	3	34	11.3	29	0
Cook, Toi, Car.	3	28	9.3	22	0
Dodge, Dedrick, S.F.	3	27	9.0	26	0
Lynch, John, T.B.	3	26	8.7	25	0
Jackson, Greg, N.O.	3	24	8.0	10	0
Sparks, Phillippi, NYG.	3	23	7.7	19	0
Brady, Jeff, Min.	3	20	6.7	8	0
Terrell, Pat, Car.	3	6	2.0	6	0
Fuller, Corey, Min.	3	3	1.0	2	0
Taylor, Bobby, Phi.	3	-1	-0.3	0	0
Blades, Bennie, Det.	2	112	56.0	98t	1
Harper, Roger, Dal.	2	30	15.0	15	0
Washington, Dewayne, Min.	2	27	13.5	27t	1
Patton, Marv, Was.	2	26	13.0	23	0
Johnson, Melvin, T.B.	2	24	12.0	24	0
Nickerson, Hardy, T.B.	2	24	12.0	17	0
Armstead, Jessie, NYG.	2	23	11.5	23	0
Newsome, Craig, G.B.	2	22	11.0	20	0
Marshall, Anthony, Chi.	2	20	10.0	20	0
Turner, Scott, Was.	2	16	8.0	12	0
Edwards, Brad, Atl.	2	15	7.5	15	0
Campbell, Jesse, NYG.	2	14	7.0	14	0
McDonald, Tim, S.F.	2	14	7.0	14	0
Pounds, Darryl, Was.	2	11	5.5	11	0
Widmer, Corey, NYG.	2	8	4.0	4	0
Jackson, Alfred M., Min.	2	4	2.0	4	0
McMillian, Mark, N.O.	2	4	2.0	4	0
Alexander, Brent, Ari.	2	3	1.5	3	0
Sanders, Deion, Dal.	2	3	1.5	2	0
Molden, Alex, N.O.	2	2	1.0	2	0
Dimry, Charles, T.B.	2	1	0.5	1	0
Doleman, Chris, S.F.	2	1	0.5	1	0

Carrier, Mark, Chi.	2	0	0.0	0	0
Harris, Walt, Chi.	2	0	0.0	0	0

RECORDS KICK RETURNS

Number: 70, Tyrone Hughes, New Orleans (1996)
Yards: 1791, Tyrone Hughes, New Orleans (1996)
Longest TD: 106 yards, Al Carmichael, Green Bay (1956);
 Roy Green, St. Louis (1979)
Touchdowns: 4, Travis Williams, Green Bay (1967);
 Cecil Turner, Chicago (1970)

20 + RETURNS	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Bates, Michael, Car.	33	998	30.2	93t	1
Walker, Herschel, Dal.	27	779	28.9	89	0
Hughes, Tyrone, N.O.	70	1791	25.6	58	0
Milburn, Glyn, Det.	64	1627	25.4	65	0
Witherspoon, Derrick, Phi.	53	1271	24.0	97t	2
Engram, Bobby, Chi.	25	580	23.2	45	0
Jackson, Jack, Chi.	27	619	22.9	60	0
Mitchell, Brian, Was.	56	1258	22.5	50	0
Williams, Kevin, Dal.	21	471	22.4	39	0
Silvan, Nilo, T.B.	28	626	22.4	54	0
Carter, Dexter, S.F.	41	909	22.2	71	0
Wheatley, Tyrone, NYG.	23	503	21.9	43	0
Thomas, J.T., St.L.	30	643	21.4	43	0
Preston, Roell, Atl.	32	681	21.3	50	0
McElroy, Leeland, Ari.	54	1148	21.3	92	0
Metcalfe, Eric, Atl.	49	1034	21.1	55	0
Howard, Desmond, G.B.	22	460	20.9	40	0
Kennison, Eddie, St.L.	23	454	19.7	44	0
Ismail, Qadry, Min.	28	527	18.8	32	0

RECORDS PUNT RETURNS

Number: 70, Danny Reece, Tampa Bay (1979)
Yards: 875, Desmond Howard, Green Bay (1996)
Longest: 103 yards, Robert Bailey, L.A. Rams (1994)
Touchdowns: 4, Jack Christiansen, Detroit (1951)

20 + RETURNS	NO	FC	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Howard, Desmond, G.B.	58	16	875	15.1	92t	3
Kennison, Eddie, St.L.	29	16	423	14.6	78t	2
Oliver, Winslow, Car.	52	17	598	11.5	84t	1
Mitchell, Brian, Was.	23	16	258	11.2	71	0
Metcalfe, Eric, Atl.	27	9	296	11.0	39	0
Palmer, David, Min.	22	20	216	9.8	69t	1
Martin, Kelvin, Dal.	41	10	373	9.1	22	0
Engram, Bobby, Chi.	31	19	282	9.1	34	0
Carter, Dexter, S.F.	36	17	317	8.8	52	0
Dowdell, Marcus, Ari.	34	8	297	8.7	35	0
Seay, Mark, Phi.	35	14	305	8.7	56	0
Milburn, Glyn, Det.	34	19	284	8.4	33	0
Hughes, Tyrone, N.O.	30	20	152	5.1	16	0

RECORDS SACKS

Number: 21, Reggie White, Philadelphia (1987);
 Chris Doleman, Minnesota (1989)

5 + SACKS	NO		NO
Greene, K., Car.	14.5	O'Neal, L., St.L.	7.0
Lathon, L., Car.	13.5	Butler, L., G.B.	6.5
Fuller, W., Phi.	13.0	Elliss, L., Det.	6.5
Barker, R., S.F.	12.5	Matthews, C., Atl.	6.5
Rice, S., Ari.	12.5	Turnbull, R., N.O.	6.5
Tolbert, T., Dal.	12.0	Hall, T., Atl.	6.0
Randle, J., Min.	11.5	Smith, C., Atl.	6.0
Young, B., S.F.	11.5	Thomas, H., Det.	6.0
Doleman, C., S.F.	11.0	Ahanotu, C., T.B.	5.5
Martin, W., N.O.	11.0	Dotson, S., G.B.	5.5
Owens, R., Was.	11.0	Jones, J., St.L.	5.5
Porcher, R., Det.	10.0	Mills, S., Car.	5.5
Carter, K., St.L.	9.5	Owens, D., Atl.	5.5
Smith, F., Min.	9.5	Thomas, W., Phi.	5.5
Harvey, K., Was.	9.0	Bratzke, C., NYG.	5.0
Sapp, W., T.B.	9.0	Flanigan, J., Chi.	5.0
White, R., G.B.	8.5	Jones, S., G.B.	5.0
Mamula, M., Phi.	8.0	Joyner, S., Ari.	5.0
Spellman, A., Chi.	8.0	Nottage, D., Was.	5.0
Johnson, J., N.O.	7.5	Strahan, M., NYG.	5.0
Harrison, M., Min.	7.0	Swann, E., Ari.	5.0
Marts, L., T.B.	7.0		



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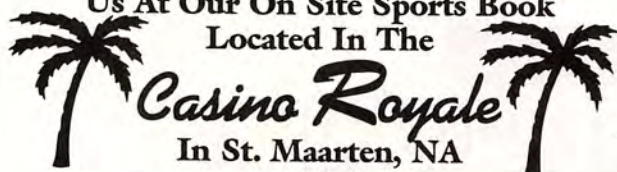
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1996 NFL RECAP

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
New England	11	5	0	.687	418	313
Buffalo	10	6	0	.625	319	266
Indianapolis	9	7	0	.563	317	334
Miami	8	8	0	.500	339	325
N.Y. Jets	1	15	0	.063	279	454

Central Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	10	6	0	.625	344	257
Jacksonville	9	7	0	.563	325	335
Cincinnati	8	8	0	.500	372	369
Houston	8	8	0	.500	345	319
Baltimore	4	12	0	.250	371	441

Western Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Denver	13	3	0	.813	391	275
Kansas City	9	7	0	.563	297	300
San Diego	8	8	0	.500	310	376
Oakland	7	9	0	.438	340	293
Seattle	7	9	0	.438	317	376

NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Dallas	10	6	0	.625	286	250
Philadelphia	10	6	0	.625	363	341
Washington	9	7	0	.563	364	312
Arizona	7	9	0	.438	300	397
N.Y. Giants	6	10	0	.375	242	297

Central Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Green Bay	13	3	0	.813	456	210
Minnesota	9	7	0	.563	298	315
Chicago	7	9	0	.438	283	305
Tampa Bay	6	10	0	.375	221	293
Detroit	5	11	0	.313	302	368

Western Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Carolina	12	4	0	.750	367	218
San Francisco	12	4	0	.750	398	257
St. Louis	6	10	0	.375	303	409
Atlanta	3	13	0	.188	309	461
New Orleans	3	13	0	.188	229	339

SUPER BOWL XXXI

At Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans, LA,
January 26, 1997, Attendance: 72,301

Green Bay	10	17	8	0	35
New England	14	0	7	0	21

SCORING

GB: Rison 54 pass from Favre (Jacke kick)
GB: FG Jacke 37
NE: Byars 1 pass from Bledsoe (Vinatieri kick)
NE: Coates 4 pass from Bledsoe (Vinatieri kick)
GB: Freeman 81 pass from Favre (Jacke kick)
GB: FG Jacke 31
GB: Favre 2 run (Jacke kick)
NE: Martin 18 run (Vinatieri kick)
GB: Howard 99 kick return
 (Chmura pass from Favre)

TEAM STATISTICS

	GB	NE
Rushing Yards	115	43
Passing Yards	208	214
Total Yards Gained	323	257
Sacked-Yards Lost	5-38	5-39
Third-Down Efficiency	3-15	4-14
Fourth-Down Efficiency	0-1	0-2
Time of Possession	34:15	25:45

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing: Green Bay-Levens 14-61, Bennett 17-40, Favre 4-12-1, Henderson 1-2;
 New England-Martin 11-42-1, Bledsoe 1-1, Meggett 1-0.

Passing: Green Bay-Favre 27-14-246-2 TD-0 Int; New England-Bledsoe 48-25-253-2 TD-4 Int.

Receiving: Green Bay-Freeman 3-105-1, Levens 3-23, Rison 2-77-1, Henderson 2-14, Chmura 2-13, Jackson 1-10, Bennett 1-4;
 New England-Coates 6-67-1, Glenn 4-62, Byars 4-42-1, Jefferson 3-34, Martin 3-28, Meggett 3-8, Brisby 2-12.

Interceptions: Green Bay-Evans, Newsome, Prior, Williams.

Sacks: Green Bay-Butler, Dotson, White 3;
 New England-Bruschi 2, Collons, McGinest, Smith.

Missed Field Goals: Jacke 47.

PAST SUPER BOWLS

1967	Green Bay 35, Kansas City 10
1968	Green Bay 33, Oakland 14
1969	New York Jets 16, Baltimore 7
1970	Kansas City 23, Minnesota 7
1971	Baltimore 16, Dallas 13
1972	Dallas 24, Miami 3
1973	Miami 14, Washington 7
1974	Miami 24, Minnesota 7
1975	Pittsburgh 16, Minnesota 6
1976	Pittsburgh 21, Dallas 17
1977	Oakland 32, Minnesota 14
1978	Dallas 27, Denver 10
1979	Pittsburgh 35, Dallas 31
1980	Pittsburgh 31, Los Angeles Rams 19
1981	Oakland 27, Philadelphia 10
1982	San Francisco 26, Cincinnati 21
1983	Washington 27, Miami 17
1984	Los Angeles Raiders 38, Washington 9
1985	San Francisco 38, Miami 16
1986	Chicago 46, New England 10
1987	New York Giants 39, Denver 20
1988	Washington 42, Denver 10
1989	San Francisco 20, Cincinnati 16
1990	San Francisco 55, Denver 10
1991	New York Giants 20, Buffalo 19
1992	Washington 37, Buffalo 24
1993	Dallas 52, Buffalo 17
1994	Dallas 30, Buffalo 13
1995	San Francisco 49, San Diego 26
1996	Dallas 27, Pittsburgh 17
1997	Green Bay 35, New England 21

SUPER BOWL MVPs

1967	Bart Starr, Green Bay Packers
1968	Bart Starr, Green Bay Packers
1969	Joe Namath, New York Jets
1970	Len Dawson, Kansas City Chiefs
1971	Chuck Howley, Dallas Cowboys
1972	Roger Staubach, Dallas Cowboys
1973	Jake Scott, Miami Dolphins
1974	Larry Csonka, Miami Dolphins
1975	Franco Harris, Pittsburgh Steelers
1976	Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh Steelers
1977	Fred Biletnikoff, Oakland Raiders
1978	Randy White and Harvey Martin, Dallas Cowboys
1979	Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh Steelers
1980	Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh Steelers
1981	Jim Plunkett, Oakland Raiders
1982	Joe Montana, San Francisco 49ers
1983	John Riggins, Washington Redskins
1984	Marcus Allen, Los Angeles Raiders
1985	Joe Montana, San Francisco 49ers
1986	Richard Dent, Chicago Bears
1987	Phil Simms, New York Giants
1988	Doug Williams, Washington Redskins
1989	Jerry Rice, San Francisco 49ers
1990	Joe Montana, San Francisco 49ers
1991	Ottis Anderson, New York Giants
1992	Mark Rypien, Washington Redskins
1993	Troy Aikman, Dallas Cowboys
1994	Emmitt Smith, Dallas Cowboys
1995	Steve Young, San Francisco 49ers
1996	Larry Brown, Dallas Cowboys
1997	Deshaun Howard, Green Bay Packers

WILD CARD GAMES

Jacksonville	30
BUFFALO	27
PITTSBURGH	42
Indianapolis	14

DALLAS	40
Minnesota	15
SAN FRANCISCO	14
Philadelphia	0

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

Jacksonville	30
DENVER	27
Pittsburgh	3
NEW ENGLAND	28

Dallas	17
CAROLINA	26
San Francisco	14
GREEN BAY	35

CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Jacksonville	6
NEW ENGLAND	20

Carolina	13
GREEN BAY	35

SUPER BOWL XXXI

Green Bay	35
New England	21



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1997 NFL WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Eastern Standard Times

PRESEASON GAMES

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EARLY GAMES

Saturday, July 26	
Buffalo at Denver	8:00
Miami at Green Bay	6:30
Pro Football Hall of Fame Game	
Minnesota v. Seattle (Canton)	5:30
Sunday, July 27	
Chicago v. Pittsburgh (Dublin)	1:00

FIRST WEEK

Thursday, July 31	
New England at Green Bay	8:00
Friday, August 1	
Atlanta at Detroit	8:30
Cincinnati at Indianapolis	7:30
Saturday, August 2	
Arizona at Seattle	10:00
Chicago at Buffalo	7:00
New Orleans v. Hou. (Memphis)	7:00
N.Y. Giants at Baltimore	8:00
Philadelphia at N.Y. Jets	8:00
Pittsburgh at Kansas City	8:00
San Francisco at San Diego	10:00
St. Louis at Minnesota	8:00
Washington v. T.B. (Orlando)	7:30
Sunday, August 3	
Carolina at Jacksonville	3:00
Oakland at Dallas	8:00
Monday, August 4	
Denver v. Miami (Guadalajara)	8:00

SECOND WEEK

Friday, August 8	
Arizona at St. Louis	8:00
Baltimore at N.Y. Jets	8:00
Cincinnati at Detroit	8:30
Dallas at New England	8:00
Green Bay at Oakland	10:00
Minnesota at Buffalo	7:30
Saturday, August 9	
Denver at Carolina	8:00
Indianapolis at San Diego	10:00
Jacksonville at N.Y. Giants	8:00
Kansas City at New Orleans	8:00
Seattle at San Francisco	9:00
Tampa Bay at Atlanta	7:30
Washington v. Hou. (Nashville)	7:00
Sunday, August 10	
Chicago at Miami	8:00
Monday, August 11	
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh	8:00

THIRD WEEK

Thursday, August 14	
Carolina at Kansas City	8:00
Friday, August 15	
St. Louis at Dallas	8:00
Saturday, August 16	
Arizona at Chicago	8:00
Baltimore at Philadelphia	8:00
Buffalo v. Green Bay (Toronto)	4:00
Indianapolis at Seattle	10:00
Miami at Tampa Bay	7:30
Minnesota at Cincinnati	8:30
New Orleans at Oakland	4:00
N.Y. Jets at N.Y. Giants	8:00
San Diego v. Houston (Nashville)	10:00
Washington at Atlanta	7:30
Sunday, August 17	
Denver at New England	1:00
Detroit at Pittsburgh	8:00
Monday, August 18	
Jacksonville at San Francisco	8:00

FOURTH WEEK

Thursday, August 21	
Detroit at Indianapolis	7:30
Kansas City at St. Louis	8:00
New England at Philadelphia	8:00
Washington at Miami	8:00
Friday, August 22	
Atlanta at Jacksonville	7:30
Buffalo at Baltimore	7:30
Houston at Dallas	8:00
New Orleans at Chicago	7:30
N.Y. Giants at G.B. (Madison)	8:00
N.Y. Jets at Tampa Bay (Orlando)	7:30
Oakland at Arizona	9:00
Pittsburgh at Carolina	8:00
San Diego at Minnesota	8:00
Seattle at Cincinnati	8:30
Saturday, August 23	
San Francisco at Denver	8:00

REGULAR SEASON GAMES

WEEK 1

Sunday, August 31	
Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Minnesota at Buffalo	1:00
New Orleans at St. Louis	1:00
Atlanta at Detroit	1:00
Arizona at Cincinnati	1:00
Dallas at Pittsburgh	1:00
Indianapolis at Miami	1:00
San Diego at New England	1:00
Oakland at Houston	1:00
San Francisco at Tampa Bay	4:00
Jacksonville at Baltimore	4:00
Kansas City at Denver	4:00
N.Y. Jets at Seattle	4:00
Washington at Carolina	8:00
Monday, September 1	
Chicago at Green Bay	9:00

WEEK 2

Sunday, September 7	
San Diego at New Orleans	1:00
San Francisco at St. Louis	1:00
Tampa Bay at Detroit	1:00
Washington at Pittsburgh	1:00
Carolina at Atlanta	1:00
Minnesota at Chicago	1:00
Cincinnati at Baltimore	1:00
Buffalo at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Houston at Miami	1:00
New England at Indianapolis	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Jacksonville	4:00
Green Bay at Philadelphia	4:00
Denver at Seattle	4:00
Dallas at Arizona	8:00
Monday, September 8	
Kansas City at Oakland	9:00

WEEK 3

<i>(Open Dates: Cincinnati, Houston, Jacksonville, Pittsburgh)</i>	
Sunday, September 14	
Baltimore at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Tampa Bay at Minnesota	1:00
Arizona at Washington	1:00
Oakland at Atlanta	1:00
Detroit at Chicago	1:00
Buffalo at Kansas City	1:00
Miami at Green Bay	1:00
New Orleans at San Francisco	4:00
St. Louis at Denver	4:00
Carolina at San Diego	4:00
Seattle at Indianapolis	4:00
N.Y. Jets at New England	8:00
Monday, September 15	
Philadelphia at Dallas	9:00

WEEK 4

<i>(Open Dates: Arizona, Dallas, Philadelphia, Washington)</i>	
Sunday, September 21	
Detroit at New Orleans	1:00
Kansas City at Carolina	1:00
Chicago at New England	1:00
Baltimore at Houston	1:00
Oakland at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Minnesota at Green Bay	1:00
N.Y. Giants at St. Louis	4:00
Atlanta at San Francisco	4:00
Indianapolis at Buffalo	4:00
Cincinnati at Denver	4:00
San Diego at Seattle	4:00
Miami at Tampa Bay	8:00
Monday, September 22	
Pittsburgh at Jacksonville	9:00

WEEK 5

<i>(Open Dates: Buffalo, Indianapolis, Miami, New England)</i>	
Sunday, September 28	
New Orleans at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Arizona at Tampa Bay	1:00
Jacksonville at Washington	1:00
Denver at Atlanta	1:00
Houston at Pittsburgh	1:00
Green Bay at Detroit	1:00
St. Louis at Oakland	4:00
Chicago at Dallas	4:00
Baltimore at San Diego	4:00
N.Y. Jets at Cincinnati	4:00
Seattle at Kansas City	4:00
Philadelphia at Minnesota	8:00
Monday, September 29	
San Francisco at Carolina	9:00

WEEK 6

(Open Dates: Atlanta, Carolina, St. Louis, San Francisco)

Sunday, October 5	
Dallas at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Washington at Philadelphia	1:00
Tampa Bay at Green Bay	1:00
Pittsburgh at Baltimore	1:00
Detroit at Buffalo	1:00
Cincinnati at Jacksonville	1:00
Kansas City at Miami	1:00
Minnesota at Arizona	4:00
Houston at Seattle	4:00
N.Y. Jets at Indianapolis	4:00
San Diego at Oakland	4:00
New Orleans at Chicago	8:00
Monday, October 6	
New England at Denver	9:00

WEEK 7

(Open Dates: Baltimore, Denver, Kansas City, Oakland, San Diego, Seattle)

Sunday, October 12	
Atlanta at New Orleans	1:00
Philadelphia at Jacksonville	1:00
Detroit at Tampa Bay	1:00
Green Bay at Chicago	1:00
Buffalo at New England	1:00
Cincinnati at Houston	1:00
Miami at N.Y. Jets	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Arizona	4:00
St. Louis at San Francisco	4:00
Carolina at Minnesota	4:00
Indianapolis at Pittsburgh	8:00
Monday, October 13	
Dallas at Washington	9:00

WEEK 8

(Open Dates: Chicago, Green Bay, Minnesota, Tampa Bay)

Thursday, October 16	
San Diego at Kansas City	8:00
Sunday, October 19	
Carolina at New Orleans	1:00
Arizona at Philadelphia	1:00
Seattle at St. Louis	1:00
San Francisco at Atlanta	1:00
Washington at Houston	1:00
Jacksonville at Dallas	1:00
New England at N.Y. Jets	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Detroit	4:00
Miami at Baltimore	4:00
Pittsburgh at Cincinnati	4:00
Denver at Oakland	4:00
Monday, October 20	
Buffalo at Indianapolis	9:00

WEEK 9

(Open Dates: Detroit, N.Y. Jets)

Sunday, October 26	
San Francisco at New Orleans	1:00
Cincinnati at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Dallas at Philadelphia	1:00
Kansas City at St. Louis	1:00
Minnesota at Tampa Bay	1:00
Baltimore at Washington	1:00
Denver at Buffalo	1:00
Houston at Arizona	4:00
Chicago at Miami	4:00
Indianapolis at San Diego	4:00
Jacksonville at Pittsburgh	4:00
Oakland at Seattle	4:00
Atlanta at Carolina	8:00
Monday, October 27	
Green Bay at New England	9:00

WEEK 10

(Open Dates: New Orleans, N.Y. Giants)

Sunday, November 2	
St. Louis at Atlanta	1:00
Tampa Bay at Indianapolis	1:00
Washington at Chicago	1:00
Oakland at Carolina	1:00
Baltimore at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Miami at Buffalo	1:00
New England at Minnesota	1:00
San Diego at Cincinnati	1:00
Philadelphia at Arizona	4:00
Dallas at San Francisco	4:00
Seattle at Denver	4:00
Jacksonville at Houston	4:00
Detroit at Green Bay	8:00
Monday, November 3	
Pittsburgh at Kansas City	9:00

WEEK 11

Sunday, November 9	
St. Louis at Green Bay	1:00
Tampa Bay at Atlanta	1:00
Detroit at Washington	1:00
Arizona at Dallas	1:00
Chicago at Minnesota	1:00
Cincinnati at Indianapolis	1:00
Kansas City at Jacksonville	1:00
N.Y. Jets at Miami	1:00
New Orleans at Oakland	4:00
N.Y. Giants at Houston	4:00
Carolina at Denver	4:00
New England at Buffalo	4:00
Seattle at San Diego	4:00
Baltimore at Pittsburgh	8:00
Monday, November 10	
San Francisco at Philadelphia	9:00

WEEK 12

Sunday, November 16	
Seattle at New Orleans	1:00
Arizona at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Philadelphia at Baltimore	1:00
Atlanta at St. Louis	1:00
New England at Tampa Bay	1:00
Washington at Dallas	1:00
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh	1:00
Denver at Kansas City	1:00
Houston at Jacksonville	1:00
Green Bay at Indianapolis	1:00
Minnesota at Detroit	1:00
Carolina at San Francisco	4:00
N.Y. Jets at Chicago	4:00
Oakland at San Diego	8:00
Monday, November 17	
Buffalo at Miami	9:00

WEEK 13

Sunday, November 23	
New Orleans at Atlanta	1:00
Pittsburgh at Philadelphia	1:00
Tampa Bay at Chicago	1:00
Arizona at Baltimore	1:00
Dallas at Green Bay	1:00
Buffalo at Houston	1:00
Indianapolis at Detroit	1:00
Miami at New England	1:00
Minnesota at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Carolina at St. Louis	4:00
San Diego at San Francisco	4:00
Jacksonville at Cincinnati	4:00
Kansas City at Seattle	4:00
N.Y. Giants at Washington	8:00
Monday, November 24	
Oakland at Denver	9:00

WEEK 14

Thursday, November 27	
Chicago at Detroit	12:30
Houston at Dallas	4:00
Sunday, November 30	
New Orleans at Carolina	1:00
Cincinnati at Philadelphia	1:00
St. Louis at Washington	1:00
San Francisco at Kansas City	1:00
Baltimore at Jacksonville	1:00
N.Y. Jets at Buffalo	1:00
Indianapolis at New England	1:00
Atlanta at Seattle	4:00
Tampa Bay at N.Y. Giants	4:00
Pittsburgh at Arizona	4:00
Miami at Oakland	4:00
Denver at San Diego	8:00
Monday, December 1	
Green Bay at Minnesota	9:00

WEEK 15

Thursday, December 4	
Houston at Cincinnati	8:00
Sunday, December 7	
St. Louis at New Orleans	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia	1:00
Green Bay at Tampa Bay	1:00
Buffalo at Chicago	1:00
Seattle at Baltimore	1:00
Denver at Pittsburgh	1:00
New England at Jacksonville	1:00
Oakland at Kansas City	1:00
Minnesota at San Francisco	4:00
Washington at Arizona	4:00
Atlanta at San Diego	4:00
Indianapolis at N.Y. Jets	4:00
Detroit at Miami	8:00
Monday, December 8	
Carolina at Dallas	9:00

WEEK 16

Saturday, December 13	
Washington at N.Y. Giants	12:30
Pittsburgh at New England	4:00
Sunday, December 14	
Philadelphia at Atlanta	1:00
Tampa Bay at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Houston at Baltimore	1:00
Jacksonville at Buffalo	1:00
Dallas at Cincinnati	1:00
Miami at Indianapolis	1:00
Detroit at Minnesota	1:00
Green Bay at Carolina	4:00
Arizona at New Orleans	4:00
Kansas City at San Diego	4:00
Seattle at Oakland	4:00
Chicago at St. Louis	8:00
Monday, December 15	
Denver at San Francisco	9:00

WEEK 17

Saturday, December 20	
Buffalo at Green Bay	12:30
St. Louis at Carolina	4:00
Sunday, December 21	
New Orleans at Kansas City	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Dallas	1:00
Philadelphia at Washington	1:00
Chicago at Tampa Bay	1:00
Baltimore at Cincinnati	1:00
Pittsburgh at Houston	1:00
Indianapolis at Minnesota	1:00
Atlanta at Arizona	4:00
San Diego at Denver	4:00
Jacksonville at Oakland	4:00
N.Y. Jets at Detroit	4:00
San Francisco at Seattle	8:00
Monday, December 22	
New England at Miami	9:00

POSTSEASON GAMES

WILD CARD GAMES

Saturday-Sunday, December 27-28

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

Saturday-Sunday, January 3-4, 1998

AFC AND NFC CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sunday, January 11, 1998

SUPER BOWL XXXII

(Jack Murphy Stadium, San Diego)

Sunday, January 25, 1998

AFC-NFC PRO BOWL

(Honolulu)

Sunday, February 1, 1998

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